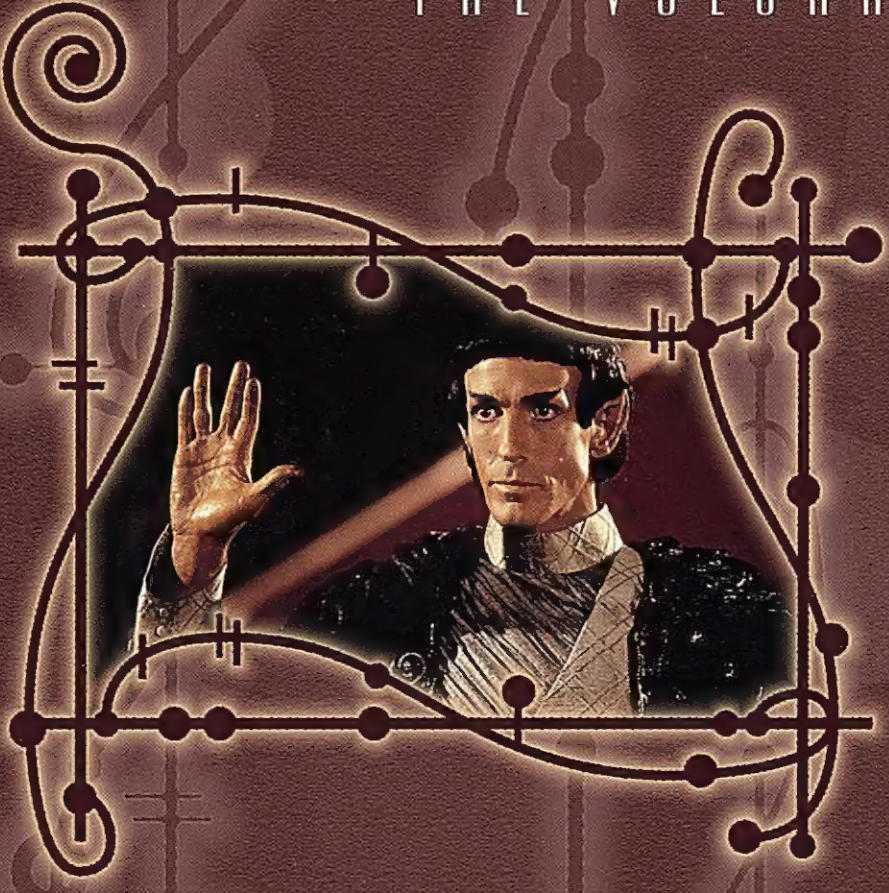
The Way of Kolinahr

The Vulcans



SOURCEBOOK

The Way of Kolinahr

The Vulcans

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DEDICATION: To Leonard Nimoy, Mark Lenard and Tim Russ. We thank you for bringing your considerable talents to bear in portraying the Vulcans. It is through you that our favorite aliens come to life, and seem not so alien after all.

DISCLAIMER: While Last Unicorn Games has researched extensively to make this the most authentic *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* roleplaying game possible, the depth of information necessary for a fully-realized roleplaying game is not always revealed during a weekly television show. While we have tried to extrapolate logically within the flavor of *ST: TNG*, some liberties have been taken and players should remember that only the events, characters and places that appear on the show or in films are canon.

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ROLEPLAYING GAME

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"Cast out your emotions,

your attachment to the illusions

of hate, passion and love,

upon the sands of Kolinahr.

Only true logic is the path

to truth and understanding.

This is The Way of Kolinahr."

From the Kolinahr Ritual,
Fifth Century

Introduction

The Away Team materialized in the courtyard outside a small, granite villa in the foothills of ShirKahr. Two individuals—Commander Wilson, first officer of the U.S.S. Valdemar, and Lieutenant Commander Stel, the Valdemar's science officer—stood under Vulcan's beating sun, briefly observing the landscape. The low, symmetrical house overlooked the Talla Valley, and had an impressive view of Mount Tarhana, a volcano long mythologized by Vulcans.

Commander Wilson seemed to wilt, already feeling the effects of Vulcan's thin air and heat. He wiped his brow with the back of his hand and said, "I wonder if the doctor gave us the proper dose of tri-ox?"

"Imagine what it would feel like if he hadn't," Stel responded dryly.

The Vulcan stood as though waiting for someone, then walked over to a small gong hanging from the portico. He rang it once, then waited again. "It would appear no one is home," he said.

"Stel, what are we doing here? The cosmic string will impact the Algolian Colonies in two days."

"There is an old Vulcan legend, still popular among Vulcan traditionalists, that when a Vulcan dies, all that he is, his katra, is said to inhabit his vre-katra, a funereal vessel similar to the ancestor tablets of Earth's ancient Japan."

"While I find Vulcan mysticism very interesting, I don't understand what that has to do with our mission."

"One of my ancestors was a scientist of great repute, and an expert in astrophysics." Stel made his way inside his family's villa, through rooms laid out with mathematical precision. Wilson followed behind. Out of the heat of the day, it already felt cooler. Wilson admired the clean, almost Spartan, décor.

Stel stopped at a small shrine, votive candles burning softly around five blue, jasif crystal orbs. "According to the legends, it may be possible to mind-meld with the vre-katra and communicate with the spirit of the dead." Wilson stood there mute, a look of disbelief on his face. "I will endeavor," the Vulcan continued, "to determine whether the legends are true by attempting to commune with my ancestor's katra, and perhaps learn of a way to divert a cosmic string."

With that, Stel knelt before the shrine and delicately picked up one of the spheres. He concentrated, clearing his mind, before beginning. "My mind, to your mind..."

Few alien species are more important to the Federation, and the *Star Trek* setting, than the Vulcans. These emotionless, logical aliens were the first confirmed extraterrestrial contact humans had, when a Vulcan survey vessel detected the warp signature of Zefram Cochrane's *Phoenix* and detoured to investigate. They played a pivotal role in the formation of the UFP, arguing for an interplanetary alliance that would ensure peace and prosperity. Throughout the Federation's history, the Vulcans remained a stalwart friend, their scholars and scientists providing the intellectual underpinnings of the Federation. The efforts of the likes of Ambassador Sarek and Captain Spock produced peace with the Klingons, Ligerians and countless other, newly encountered species. For over 200 years, the Vulcans

have formed one of the bulwarks of the United Federation of Planets.

It was not always so. In the early years of the Federation, the Vulcans were uncomfortable dealing with other, more "emotional" species. They preferred to remain isolated and refused to open up to "outworlders." Few visited the Vulcan homeworld, and many Vulcans had a decided disinterest in joining the Federation's intergalactic organizations. The Vulcans kept themselves shrouded in mystery, divulging little information on Vulcan customs and history. Having concluded the logic of founding and joining the Federation, the Vulcans retreated into solitude to limit the emotional distractions presented by outsiders.

All that began to change with a young Vulcan named Spock. Disobeying his father's wishes, Spock joined Starfleet—the first Vulcan to do so. Over the years, his exploits fired the imaginations of Vulcans young and old. He became a legend not only throughout the Federation, but also among his own people. As they learned they could deal with the outworlders' perplexing, irrational and illogical behavior, more and more Vulcans joined Starfleet, dispelling some of the Vulcan mystique. By the 24th century, Vulcan would welcome visitors from across the Galaxy, and participate as a full partner in the grand experiment that is the United Federation of Planets.

WHAT IS THIS BOOK?

Few *Star Trek* fans can say they do not have a fond Spock moment, a scene where something he did touched or amused us. Perhaps it was the time when, under the influence of the Psi 2000 disease, Spock wrestled with his feelings for Nurse Chapel. Maybe it was the time when he mind-melded with the Horta, trying to bridge the gap between silicon- and carbon-based life, or when he tried to use 20th century idiomatic speech in *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*. Who can forget when Spock, emerging from the blood fever of *ponn far*, the *ahn-woon* in his hands wrapped around his friend's neck, realized what he'd done? Every week, viewers tuned in not only to see the exploits of the *U.S.S. Enterprise*, but also to see Spock. With his pointed ears and strange lack of emotion, he instantly captured our imaginations. Even casual viewers knew who Mr. Spock was. How many of us actually wanted to be Vulcan, if only for a moment, to use that nerve pinch?

Through the efforts of the writers and Leonard Nimoy's acting skill, we learned tantalizing tid-bits about Vulcan and her people. They abandoned emotion in favor of logic to save themselves from destroying each other. They were driven to mate once every seven years. They had a secondary eyelid and could withstand high levels of radiation because of their world's harsh environment. They could share thoughts and memories through something called a "mind meld." But it was what was left unstated that fascinated the most: what happened during the age of Vulcan antiquity, when Vulcans battled with deadly telepathic weapons? What was the capital of Vulcan, and what was it like? What was the nature of Vulcan spirituality, with its *katra* and strange rituals?

Here's your chance to become Vulcan, to provide your own interpretation of Vulcan culture. Undergo the *Kolinahr* training on the plateau of Tai-la. Debate the properties of resublimated anti-protons with your fellow scientists at the Vulcan Science Academy. Pick up a *lirpa* and fight for your mate. Seek out the *Planfa* monks to learn their telepathic abilities. This book provides players with information on the Vulcans and their planet, allowing players to explore the Vulcan within. Narrators will find kiloquads of data to set their episodes and series on Vulcan, or to include Vulcans as supporting-cast characters. Fascinating indeed...

Chapter One: The Way of Kolinahr

This chapter provides an overview of the Vulcan people. Learn about Vulcan physiology, art and architecture, and cuisine. Unlock the secrets of Vulcan's past, from its brutal Age of Antiquity when psionic mindlords warred for control of the planet, to its present stature as a bulwark of the peaceful Federation.

Chapter Two: The Vulcan Government

Chapter Two introduces the Vulcan government and institutions like the Vulcan Science Academy, the Vulcan defense forces (the *V'ket*), and the *V'shar*. Learn about Vulcan's relations with other members of the Federation, and their opinions about species like the Klingons and Romulans. Finally, the chapter includes information on the Vulcan Isolationist Movement, their motivations and current activities.

Chapter Three: The Planet Vulcan

The hot, rocky planet of Vulcan is covered in Chapter Three. Visit Vulcan's capital of ShirKahr and explore the streets of the Artisan's Quarter, or enjoy a bowl of *plomeek* soup in a restaurant near the Vulcan Council Chambers. Journey to the steps of Mount Seleya to debate the finer points of Surak's teachings. Study the ancient techniques of *lirpa* and *ahn-woon* at the Vulcan Institute of Defensive Arts. Everything a Narrator needs to set her episodes on Vulcan is included here, including game statistics for creatures like the *sehlat* and *le-matya*.

Chapter Four: Vulcan Technology

In Chapter Four, players will find extensive information on Vulcan technology and Vulcan psionic devices. With a long history of extrasensory ability, and perhaps the most developed psionic techniques in the Federation, the Vulcans have developed a number of devices to augment their natural aptitudes.

Chapter Five: Vulcan Characters

Finally, Chapter Five contains rules for creating Vulcan characters. Players and Narrators alike can create Vulcan scientists, *V'shar* agents and psionic masters to populate their series. Players will find extensive notes on Vulcan skills, advantages, and disadvantages. In addition, players can choose from a number of psionic abilities for their characters, allowing their characters to heal faster, ignore pain, or become invisible to the senses of others.

The Way of Kolinahr

For many other cultures, the study of Vulcans is a laborious one, filled with contradictions and paradoxes. They say they act only on logic, yet practice what some may consider almost barbaric mating rituals. Vulcans eagerly dissect each nuance of science and mathematics, yet possess a deep spirituality. They are coldly rational and passionately traditional. Many of these seeming discrepancies are vital parts of Vulcan culture and although other species despair of ever fully understanding their mindset, to the people of Vulcan it is only the logical way to exist.

One of the central and most overemphasized assumptions about Vulcan culture is that they have no emotions. Not only do Vulcans have emotions, their emotions are so strong and violent that in order to ensure the survival of their race, they were forced to find ways to suppress and control them. Surak, one of the most important figures in Vulcan mythology and history, brought the Vulcan race out of widespread warfare and into a golden age of logic and peace by teaching his people how to control their passionate feelings. For over 2,000 years, the Vulcan people have followed Surak's teachings, continuing to learn methods to restrain and control their inner compulsions.

This is one reason for Vulcan meditation—they're trying to analyze and understand their feelings, so that they can act on logic, rather than emotion. Contemplation and intense internal dissection help the Vulcan people to understand their emotional responses, so that they can banish and control those urges in order to apply logic and reason. If a Vulcan is angry, meditation helps him to understand the source of that emotion and apply reasonable arguments to his own desires. If a Vulcan is happy about something, meditation helps him understand that feeling rather than relying on the fickle responses of emotion. The habit of meditation is conjoined with and almost indistinguishable from the practice of mental exercises to compartmentalize emotional response and practice logical thinking—working *kal-toh* problems or abstruse mathematical equations, for example. Surak taught many such exercises to his first disciples.

Vulcans consider it a serious breach of etiquette to show one's emotions in public, and such display is looked upon with disapproval and contempt. A Vulcan who cannot control himself, whether through age and infirmity or through choice, is considered an outcast, pitiable and ignored. Commonly, a Vulcan will choose to pretend the emotional outburst did not occur, rather than dignify it with a response. Similarly, Vulcans have a difficult time interacting with the Federation's more emotional species, leading to a certain aloofness.

The Vulcan Environment

Vulcan's sun (also called Vulcanis), the orange star sixteen light years from Sol named 40 Eridani A by Terran astronomers, is similar to our own in intensity and composition. Vulcan's orbital and rotational cycles also follow the same pattern as Earth's. The

Vulcan year is approximately 250 days long and its day/night cycle occurs in a pattern of 27 hours, slightly longer than that of Earth. One significant difference is the lack of seasonal climate caused by Vulcan's almost nonexistent axial tilt. To some extent, Vulcan's relatively high orbital eccentricity gives seasonal effects, but general climate on Vulcan varies much less than on Earth. It has been estimated that this orbital pattern is caused by the unusual gravitational pull of 40 Eridani A's twin companions and by the extraordinarily small distance (only 0.56 AU) between Vulcan and its sun.

This proximity also makes Vulcan hotter than Earth, and the climate never changes, giving little to no relief from the heat and aridity that blanket the planet's surface. Vulcan is extremely hot and dry, with a lower-oxygen atmosphere and a somewhat higher gravity than Earth. On Vulcan, the conditions are more uniform and harsh than those of Earth, thus Vulcans are more environmentally specialized and homogeneous than Terrans. Further, the planet Vulcan receives more radiation through its thinner atmosphere, resulting in a greater mutational and evolutionary cycle, supporting changes in genetics and physiology over less time than on Earth. Thus, Vulcans rapidly adapted to their living conditions, not only to become Vulcan's dominant species, but for simple survival.

Because Vulcan is a planet created by tectonic activity, Vulcans built many of their larger cities with earthquakes and other natural disasters in mind. The planet Vulcan seems to have the same passionate internal emotions that plague its dominant race, as tectonic clefts and shifts in geology often cause shifts in the planet's surface. Because of this, Vulcans plan their architecture with care—spacing buildings well apart, grading wide roads, and stocking plentiful construction materials in case of total destruction of buildings or cities. Further, Vulcan urban planning takes into account the active geology of the planet's surface and takes advantage of the few stable sites on the major continents. Vulcan life is occasionally reminded that the core of its planet seethes with activity and restless fury: Even as recently as 2265, the city of *K'lan* sank during a powerful seismic subduction.

PHYSIOLOGY

The population of the planet Vulcan is composed of only some 1.5 billion inhabitants, but the number of Vulcanoid lifeforms in the galaxy (including Debrune offshoots, Rigellians, and Romulans) has been estimated at close to 35 billion by the Federation Census of 2360. Vulcans tend to be tall and dark-haired, with elongated earlobes and slanted eyebrows. Some Vulcans have pronounced browlines. Like humans, Vulcans have a broad variety of skin colors—as a general rule, Xialites and other tropical-descended Vulcans possess darker complexions.

Although externally Vulcans seem to have much in common with Terrans, Vulcan internal physiology is quite different. Males and females are of similar height and stature, averaging 2 meters in height and 70 kilos in weight. Although their structure and frame are of similar height to those of Terrans, their strength is derived from longer muscle mass and a denser skeletal frame, the consequences of evolution in Vulcan's higher gravity and thinner atmosphere. One other significant difference from Terran physiology is the distinct lack of Vulcan sweat glands. Vulcans use blood, skin, and body structure to cool themselves, rather than perspiration, which would be inefficient given the high temperatures on the planet Vulcan.

Vulcan epidermis is unlike any other in the galaxy. Forming a two-way moisture-proof shield, it protects Vulcans from external liquids and pressure, as well as maintaining the inner temperature and liquid environment of their organs. Because Vulcan blood is copper-based rather than iron-based, it is green in color and is extremely effective in separating and utilizing the smaller amounts of oxygen available

in Vulcan's low-pressure, mildly irradiated environment. Due to this specialization of their blood and blood cells, Vulcans can survive for several minutes under water or in any oxygen-poor environment, as long as there is a small amount of oxygen available.

Not much is known about the Vulcan brain, although it is clear from even the simplest autopsy that the Vulcan midbrain is larger and more complex, and contains more nerve endings and blood capillaries than similar areas of Terran brains. The only other major species known to possess such a large percentage of midbrain is the Betazoid race, whose midbrain comprises nearly 65% of their entire brain mass. Vulcan midbrains are significantly smaller, averaging only 45% of the organ, yet this is still much more than comparative races. It is assumed that the majority of Vulcan psionic powers come from this enlarged region, although further testing has been inconclusive.

A clear inner eyelid formed of a nictitating membrane that filters radiation, dust, and other harmful elements protects Vulcan eyes. Further, their range of vision is more acute, as is their ability to recognize color frequencies and perceive more clearly at a distance. This seems to have certain negative drawbacks, as well, as many Vulcans describe painful symptoms, similar to headaches and eyestrain, from being exposed to vibrant high colorations for long periods of time. Also, the Vulcan optic nerve, much more delicate and sensitive than a typical Terran nerve, is more prone to disease and degeneration.

One of the most commonly noted differences between Terran and Vulcan physiology is the shape and structure of the earlobe and the functioning of the Vulcan inner ear. Although the Vulcan ear shape helps to funnel sound and intensify the reception of harmonics, the internal structure of the eardrum is very different, formed of no fewer than three separate functioning eardrums. In tests, these eardrums seem to respond to differing volume and pitch, relaying the sound through separate channels to the nerve centers of the brain. Each works independently, and in Vulcans of advanced age it is most often the low-pitched eardrum that deteriorates.

Another biological difference is the shape and structure of the Vulcan skull. Vulcans have only 28 teeth, lacking rear molars and possessing a longer mandibulary movement than most bipedal species. This has caused some to speculate that the Vulcan physiology is related to human, or rather that Vulcans and humans share a common ancestor, as humans without rear molars have become more predominant evolutionarily. Although the bone structure of the Vulcan skull is thinner, the actual skull casing (like all Vulcan bones) is formed of extremely dense matter, allowing a thinner depth of bone actually to be harder and stronger than a human skull.

Vulcan internal organs tend to operate at a much faster rate than those of comparable species, with an average heart rate as high as 265 beats per minute. The Vulcan heart lies in the center of the torso, surrounded by a large lung structure, capable of holding approximately 20% more capacity than Terran lungs. Of course, the Vulcan torso, ribcage, and musculature are also significantly longer, in order to encompass the organs within.

Vulcan hormonal activity is under muscular control and can be regulated by conscious processes of trained Vulcans. Thus, it is possible that a Vulcan can control his adrenaline, thyroid, and other metabolic systems, causing a change in heart rate, oxygen consumption, and other bodily resources. This accounts for the amazing Vulcan capacity to "regenerate" wounds, using a special trance state in order to repair any internal or structural damage more efficiently. The one primary exception to this rule is the reproductive hormone complex released during the *Pon farr*, in which a hormone known as *yamareen* is released into the bloodstream of the mature male Vulcan. Although the female Vulcan can be impregnated after her menstrual cycle begins (typically as early as age 16 and as late as 25), the male Vulcan is incapable of creating

progeny until after the onset of his first *pon farr*. Thereafter, the Vulcan male is capable of reproducing, but must obey the physical urge to mate every seven years, during the *pon farr*. Vulcans, humans, and Klingons are all interfertile, giving credence to theories that all three races spring from common ancestors seeded by the Preservers.

PSYCHOLOGY

"Each of us at some time in our life turns to someone, a father, a brother, a God, and asks 'Why am I here? What was I meant to be?'"

-Spock (Star Trek: The Motion Picture)

Surak's teachings are the most important philosophical essays in Vulcan history, detailing the use of logic and reason in order to control warring emotions and destructive tendencies. In the beginning, Vulcans used their emotions as a tool, preferring to apply logic to justify their actions rather than use logic to guide their actions. As the race evolved and the teachings of Surak spread, however, the use of various techniques to banish and suppress emotion became more prevalent and Vulcan psychology blossomed. The understanding of one's mind and mental processes as well as one's emotional reactions became a necessity, and psychology was applied not only to one's own actions but also to understanding the actions of others.

Now, the foremost psychologists on Vulcan belong to the religious orders that guide Vulcan society. Surak's school, the largest and most popular sect of Vulcan beliefs, advocates the study and understanding of emotional desires, so that the student can suppress and control them. Constant study of this process, as well as assisting others in achieving mastery of psionics through control of emotion, has caused the devotees of this doctrine to become experts on the workings and common psychological traumas of Vulcan minds.

The school of Surak has many techniques which can open the mind of a student, perceiving where the student's difficulties and strongest emotions lie and adjusting the mind's processes so that the student can more completely face the emotion and learn to control it. Thus, they are experienced in abnormal psychology as well as the common workings of Vulcan minds. When a Vulcan is unable to control his emotions, his family or colleagues often summon a devotee of Surak to deal with him. When a Vulcan willingly gives in to his emotions, it is one goal of those who follow the doctrines of Surak to help him resolve his problems and rejoin society.

One of the most contemplated teachings of Surak is his admonition that one should study reason above all else. ("The chief subject of reason is reason.") Surak taught that a Vulcan should learn to discern reality both as it seems to be and as it truly is. This dissection of truth from illusion has spurred Vulcans into intense study of science and mathematics, helping them dissect many of the most complex workings of the universe into logical steps. Patience, temperance, and logical observation (truthfulness to the world) are three of the greatest virtues of Vulcan culture and all have great application to scientific reasoning. Vulcans believe that their adherence to this doctrine makes them the foremost scientists in the Federation.

Further, the application of these virtues, combined with intense meditation, has given Vulcans great control over their native psionic abilities. They remain unable, however, to control that most famous biological trigger of Vulcan mental abilities, the *pon farr*.

REPRODUCTION

The biological and anthropological origins of *pon farr* remain unclear, and Vulcan modesty defeats Vulcan curiosity, leaving the subject mostly unstudied. The secretion of a hormone complex known as *yamareen* causes the *pon farr*, or mating cycle. Difficult to reproduce scientifically, all attempts to create *yamareen* in laboratory experiments have been unsuccessful. In the prehistoric phase of Vulcan, men fought to the death regularly for the right to mate with females. This kept the population down (useful on a desert planet) and ensured that only the strongest survived to reproduce. It also hindered the growth of Vulcan society, as men would not cooperate with others who could soon be their deadly enemies.

Pon farr occurs every seven years, regardless of physical condition or the Vulcan's social capacity to mate. Those who feel the "blood stirring" have not always had the luxury of being ceremonially joined to another Vulcan. In this case, they are free to choose their mate as they see fit, hoping that they will be

accepted. If a Vulcan is rejected or if his *pon farr* is allowed to continue without mating, he is said to suffer from *plak tow*, the "blood fever."

Plak tow is extremely dangerous and can result in death if not carefully controlled. Those around a *plak tow* sufferer will not speak his name out of courtesy. Ideally, this is the Vulcan way of "ignoring" the incident's occurrence at all, allowing the sufferer to endure with a minimum of stigma from other Vulcans. This habit caused many deaths (and still does in some remote parts of the planet), because a series of intense meditations and rigorous physical disciplines is required to survive an unrequited *plak tow*, and even these methods are not always successful.

Vulcans revert to ancient mating ceremonies during their *pon farr*, attempting to cover their emotional abandon with logic and ancient ritual. The parents of both parties, as well as representatives from the school of Surak or other religious orders, oversee the mating contract. This ritual begins well before puberty, to minimize irrational behavior and channel it toward social cohesion rather than the rutting madness that split Vulcan apart during its prehistory.

At age seven, Vulcans ceremonially bond telepathically with their betrothed. This tradition dates back to the early, violent days of Vulcan history, when great families arranged marriages for convenience and alliance. Some families, notably those who are old, wealthy, or influential, still hold to this tradition, called *koon-ul*, "the Joining." At the proper time, both individuals feel the strange rise of emotions, the nearly uncontrollable urges and overwhelming passions, signaling the start of *pon farr*. Other, less traditional, Vulcans simply rely on *shon-ha'lock*, "the engulfment," to direct them to a mate at the proper time. This experience, although similar to human "love at first sight", is seen by most Vulcans as a dangerous but necessary experience, much like *kahs-wan*.

During *pon farr*, the two betrothed parties meet at a ceremonial ground (usually the one belonging to the more influential family) and engage in the rite of *Koon-ut-kal-if-fee*, "marriage or challenge." Here, the bride has the right to demand that the groom win her in mortal combat with a champion. (Some versions of the ritual allow the bride herself to serve as her own champion in combat.)

Koon-ut-kal-if-fee is a survivor of ancient Vulcan customs from times when the great houses used marriages as tests of military and political strength. In modern times, a formalized question replaces this rite and the ceremony goes forth as planned. *Koon-ut so'-lik*, the formal marriage proposal, can occur during the *koon-ul*, at the beginning of the mutual *pon farr*, or even at the conclusion of the ceremony. Although much of the *pon farr* is public, the deep emotional nature of the situation causes Vulcans to shield it from the prying eyes of other races.

This is but one aspect of the Vulcan traditional reserve, stemming from a cultural fear of emotional vulnerability and exposure called *k'oh-nar*. The almost Victorian Puritanism of Vulcans toward the *pon farr* specifically has aroused much curiosity in other members of the Federation, but Vulcans insist on privacy during these and similarly personal rituals.

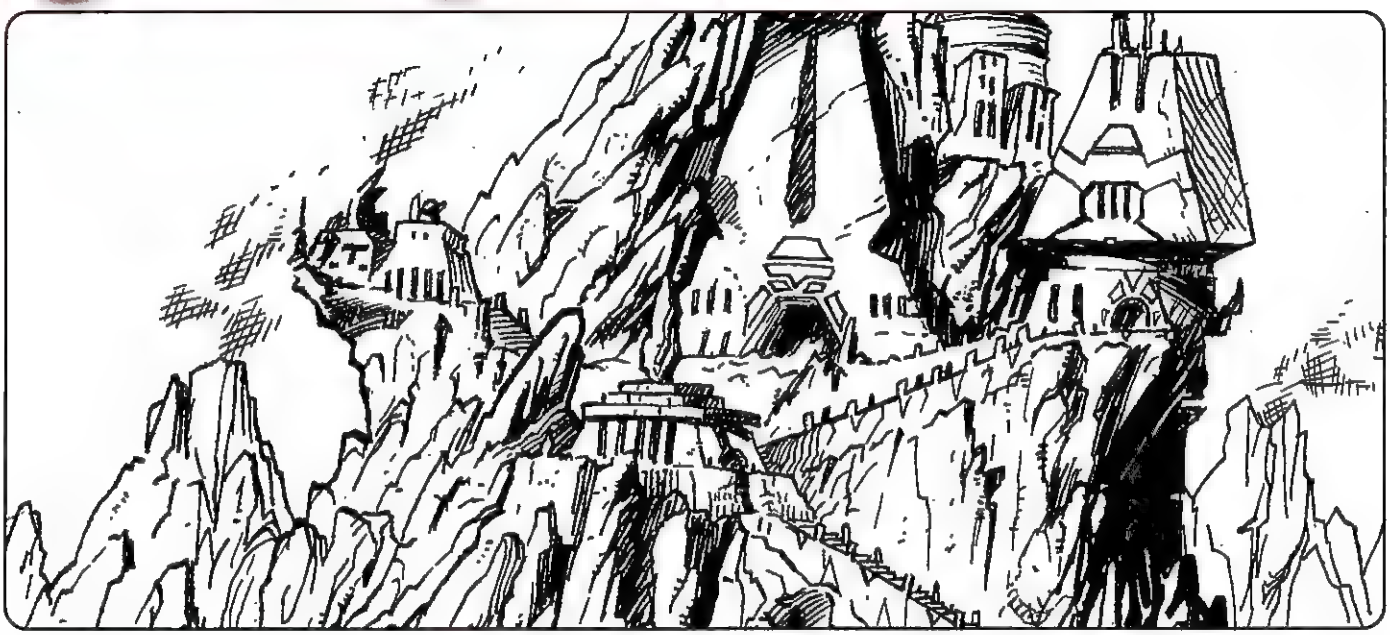
Vulcan Culture

ART

Vulcan art is intensely formal and traditional. It is not intended to evoke an emotional response, unlike the art of other cultures or even of Vulcan's past. Rather, Vulcan art often projects a calmness conducive to meditative thought. This is especially common in arts such as interior design, landscaping, and gardening and in plastic arts such as painting, *keethara* block art, and sculpture. Other Vulcan arts actively stimulate thought; into this category fall arts such as poetry, song (instrumental music such as a Vulcan lute sonata often conveys mathematical or geometrical concepts), dance, and games.

Vulcans see the play of a game of strategy as both an intellectual exercise and a performance illustrating modes of thought. Earth games like chess, go, and *ohwaree* all have their devotees on Vulcan, but the ancient Vulcan game of *kal-toh* (a puzzle of balance and concentration) draws spectators from all over the planet for its Master tournaments.

The most radical arts, influenced by Centauran schools, seek to build alternate intellectual constructs. These arts, centering on holography (or much less commonly *ska-plak* forgery), have gained little acceptance with deeply conservative average Vulcans.



ARCHITECTURE

Vulcan architecture is as precise and logical as the Vulcan philosophy of life. Vulcans prefer clean, mathematical designs. Their buildings tend to be geometric, both in design and in layout. They build using a variety of stone, such as granite and marble, both found in great quantity on Vulcan. A third stone, unlike any on Earth, is known as *bureki* stone. It is volcanic in origin and is suitable for building in Vulcan's high temperatures, because it does not conduct heat well. Further, *bureki* is a more flexible stone than marble or granite and withstands the numerous tectonic shocks which occasionally ripple Vulcan's surface. Thus, many of Vulcan's older buildings have *bureki* stone foundations.

Because of the hotter climate, Vulcan buildings are generally open and spacious on the inside. Columnar verandas and courtyards surround large rooms with light paper or wood screen walls. On Vulcan, wood is considerably rarer than on Earth, so wooden constructions are as light as possible. When stone is used in interiors, it is primarily for support rather than as a primary building material. Wide, open walkways and lush gardens with running fountains and pools of clear water form the heart of many Vulcan residences and large, netted windows catch cool breezes. Vulcans also tend to build "contemplative" spaces, places conducive to meditation and serenity.

Vulcan rooms are rarely covered with paintings or wall hangings. Instead, Vulcans prefer frescoes and murals painted directly onto the plain surface of the wall, whether on paper or stone. Vulcans enjoy statuary and carving, from bas-reliefs to icons in niches. Simple tables and high-backed chairs, as well as shifting surfaces, furnish a typical Vulcan room. The floors are often stepped into daises and plateaus in order to separate a larger space into smaller parts.

Vulcan architecture, like Vulcan art, is designed to elicit thought, rather than an emotional response. Vulcan rooms are designed to use mathematical lines and forms to divide what appears to be empty space. Despite what non-Vulcans think, Vulcans appreciate beauty. They admire art from other cultures, primarily because of the thoughts and insights that it provokes.

CUISINE

"In a strict scientific sense, Doctor, we all feed on death-even vegetarians."
-*Spock* ("Wolf in the Fold", Star Trek)

Those who do not comprehend its nature often call Vulcan food bland. Because their taste buds are more sensitive than those of humans or other races, Vulcans take great care in the preparation of food. Eating is a ritual that requires time and precision, as do many Vulcan tasks. The exact nature and amount of spice and the perfect consistency of the food is very important.

Vulcans are strictly vegetarian and refuse to eat meat even when traveling to other planets and visiting other cultures. Because they are used to the less spicy flavors of Vulcan food, they often have difficulty digesting the foods of many other cultures. Klingon food, for example, is totally repulsive to a Vulcan.

Because of their high sense of taste, Vulcan food tends to be delicately flavored. The emphasis is on enjoying the subtle flavors of the food and the beauty of its preparation, rather than on spices and harsh tastes. Some Vulcan dishes have been adopted by other Federation races and are considered delicacies. Vulcan mocha is a beverage similar to coffee, but with a lighter taste. It is greenish brown in color (which some races find disconcerting) and is made from the berries of the *g'teth* plant. Vulcan mollusks are another delicacy, best sautéed in *Rhombolian* butter, although only a very few Vulcans eat mollusks. *Plomeek* soup, on the other hand, is a Vulcan staple (much like Russian borscht) which comes in many regional varieties but rarely appeals to offworlders.

Vulcan port is similar to human brandy in color and consistency, but smells more like flowers than alcohol. It is created from tree bark and must be aged for nearly 50 years before it is considered palatable by Vulcans. Over 100 years ago, a bottle of Vulcan port bottled in the time of Surak was discovered in the ruins of an ancient Vulcan city. It rests now in the T'sar Museum as one of the planetary treasures.

Another unusual cuisine type which Vulcans have perfected are the *ob'taree*, or fasting meals. These high-vitamin, low-intake foods are designed to supplement a Vulcan's diet of water while he experiences a lengthy ritual fast, for purification or any other reason. Without these supplements, the Vulcan body would quickly wither and die during the most intense fasts. These foods have been used by the Federation as required fare for scouting missions, as an individual is capable of surviving for many days on the barest amount of *ob'taree*, in danger or other extreme circumstances.

Science

Another important aspect of Vulcan life and culture is their dedication to science. Vulcans perceive science as a means to understanding and as a natural evolution of the logical processes which they apply to their emotions and society. They engage in intellectual pursuits with fervor, believing that by analyzing the universe and understanding its nature they can understand the nature of all things. Vulcan ideology centers around natural law and physics as they apply equally to all parts of reality; the Vulcan search for rigorous scientific knowledge is a manifestation of the highest Vulcan virtue of truthfulness.

Vulcans are responsible for great achievements in the sciences—everything from chemistry and particle physics to archaeology and linguistics. The Vulcan Science Academy is one of the finest scientific organizations in the Federation, rivaling the famed Daystrom Institute for accuracy and innovation. Every Vulcan scientist dreams of being invited to conduct research at the VSA. The natural desire for knowledge, amplified by the Vulcan applications of mental techniques and study, results in the logical desire to increase one's knowledge, not only for personal interest and for the furtherance of society and technology of Vulcan culture but for greater understanding of the cosmos.

Although weapons technology is seldom a primary Vulcan concern, rotating shield frequency modulators, upgraded hull strengths, and further modifications to Federation ships are high on the list of VSA research topics. This has caused great strains within the VSA, as many professors and scholars there believe that researching weapons violates the pacifist code of Surak. Pure and theoretical physicists continue working on these enigmas, but many Vulcan applied physicists and engineers refuse to design weapons systems for Starfleet.

Scientists at the Academy study many modern quandaries, but one difficulty has recently captured the interest of many of the leading researchers at the VSA. That problem is the Borg. Starfleet has turned much Borg technology recovered from crashed ships or gathered by Federation vessels unfortunate enough to have faced the Borg (at Wolf 359 or other incidents) over to the VSA for study. The danger of another, possibly more devastating meeting with the Borg is almost inevitable, and VSA technologists work to ensure that the Federation has as much information as possible.

Vulcan curiosity wins out when it comes to the raw data derived from the Borg wars. Scientists at the VSA have made great strides in understanding the strange encryptions of Borg data files. Vulcan astronomers (and the rest of the Federation) have begun to collate and cross-reference the detailed information about distant sectors, alien species, and stellar phenomena experienced and classified by the Borg. Captured Borg fragments have proved invaluable to these efforts, and Vulcan scholars remain optimistic that the Borg data will, in the end, provide benefits to Vulcan science that far outweigh the harm done by the Borg invasions.

Integration of Borg technology into existing Federation ships and science is still a long way off, but Vulcan psychologists work eagerly on programs to understand the Borg mentality and hive organization. Vulcans hope that by learning how the Borg think and operate, they will make it possible to negotiate with the Borg and seek a more peaceful solution to future conflicts.

Vulcan Religion

A common misconception among humans and other races is that all Vulcans are alike. Vulcans have a culture obsessed with logic, after all. Therefore, if faced with a dilemma, all Vulcans would logically come to the same conclusion.

However, nothing could be further from the truth. To the Vulcan race, logic is almost a religion and, like any other religion, it is filled with sects and schools of thought, each with wildly differing opinions on nearly every subject. Vulcan religion was born in the fires of Vulcan's legendary and violent past, and it has transformed over the centuries.

THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

The ancient religion of the Vulcans contained a wide pantheon of gods, each with a dual character. Sculptures and portraits of the gods revealed two natures: one wrathful, the other joyful. This duality pervaded ancient Vulcan belief for thousands of years.

At the Time of the Awakening, the focus of Vulcan thought turned away from deities and toward reason. It was a difficult turn, for unlike psionically deaf humanity, Vulcans had already done much research in the realm of the spiritual. Methods of tapping into the *katra*, the Vulcan soul, had already been developed, and power from it exploited.

Vulcan philosophers and holy men were forced to seek a compromise between reason and faith. They found it in the heart of their own religion. Vulcans stopped looking to the skies and mountains for their gods and started looking within. Even now, traditionalist cults still hold to the worship of the Vulcan gods, but such Vulcans interact little with the technological utopia of the Federation.

THE INNER CHORUS

With the help of their elders, Vulcans began to understand their own emotions as manifestations of their gods. They began to call these powers within themselves *Ka-ta-pak*, or "the Inner Chorus." Each emotion was a manifestation of the gods of old.

Vulcan religion taught that the gods were not simple analogies but living beings, a part of the Vulcan psyche. Each god was also a demon, a trickster spirit seeking to fool the Vulcans into irrational, dangerous emotion. Meditation became a kind of prayer, an exercise in taming the inner demons with the help of their rational counterparts. As time moved on, different schools of thought developed, each with its own meditations and techniques for dealing with the demons of the Inner Chorus.

Among the most prominent voices within the Chorus are emotions Vulcans have been struggling with for many thousands of years. The brightest of the voices is *Tel-alep*, the Watcher. He is the personification of curiosity, the desire for knowledge. He is the kindliest of the Chorus. He is often represented as an ancient Vulcan chained to a great book. Within the book is all the knowledge in the world.

His wrathful aspect is *Alep-tel*, the Bitter. He is jaded and embittered by all he has seen and is very eager to give advice. The advice he gives is poisoned by centuries of cynicism and futility.

Kir-alep, the god of peace and acceptance, still holds a place in Vulcan thoughts and hearts. His priesthood's acceptance of *Tu-Surak* helped inestimably in converting the conservative and traditional Vulcans to the new ways. His wrathful aspect is *Alep-kir*, the Sullen. This god draws Vulcans into apathy and pessimistic cynicism. *Alep-kir* is often represented as the enervating heat of the high desert draining energy from the body.

The dancing young maiden is *Valdena*, representing love, joy, and beauty. Her slender and athletic body dances among a veil of clouds, rejoicing in the beauty of the world. In her eyes is the magical glory of discovery. Every time a child tastes the rain for the first time, every time a scientist finds the missing link to curing a horrible disease, every time a couple fall in love, her light shines in their eyes.

Dena-vel is the covetous aspect of joy. Like a spider, she traps the things she loves and hides them away from the rest of the world, so that only she may enjoy their beauty. Then, when they betray her, she transforms into the creature she represents and drinks every drop of their lifeblood, destroying them forever.

One of the most dangerous voices, *Kal-ap-ton*, is the personification of grief. Depicted as a tall, gaunt, and pale young man in mourning clothes, *Kal-ap-ton* is never shown in public, only in places of mourning. *Kal-ap-ton* carries a small pouch, filled with tears, wherever he goes. Temples to *Kal-ap-ton* (where the dead are laid to rest) are the only appropriate places for Vulcans to cry.

While most Vulcans understand that grief is an illogical emotion (for all Vulcans shall meet again one day in the afterlife), they do recognize that it is a logical and essential part of life. In order for a soul to remain healthy, it must say goodbye. However, when that grief is carried out into the world, that is when *Tyr-al-tep* takes control.

Tyr-al-tep is the unforgiver, the whisperer. He whispers into a brother's ear, "You should have saved him." He whispers into the mother's ear, "You never told him you loved him." He is the one who makes a Vulcan forget about what is and brood only on what might have been.

Anger is personified as *Ket-cheleb*, the Destroyer and Blood-Drinker. He killed his joyful aspect long ago and hung him on a great tree in the center of the world. *Ket-cheleb* is the most powerful of the dark voices and the most dangerous. The Vulcan mind is too easily seduced by the cries of *Ket-cheleb*, and it requires a great deal of willpower to hold him at bay.

While the different schools of Vulcan thought depict the passions the same way, they do not treat them all the same. Each school teaches its students different techniques for dealing with the gods that live within their hearts and minds. Disagreeing schools do not discount out of hand the theories and practices of their rivals, but their discussions are some of the most heated debates in the history of any Federation culture.

T'plana-Hath and the Birth of Vulcan Logic

T'plana-Hath was the head of a school of Vulcan historians in ShirKahr during the wars against Sudoc. She was famous for the wide-ranging nature of her school, which examined issues from philosophy to mathematics to agriculture, all refracted through the prism of history. The finest minds and noblest-born youth of Vulcan competed to join her collegium and her reputation spread throughout the world.

She saw the work of history as the separation of rational fact from legend, propaganda, and wishful thinking, of which Vulcan had a great surplus in her era. She once said (in a phrase that later generations of Vulcan historians have taken all too seriously), "The history of Vulcan logically predates my birth, but I could not attest to it with the evidence at hand."

Eventually, she came to see the development of logic (including mathematics, science, and rhetoric) itself as the supreme triumph of Vulcan civilization. Her *History of Logic* remains a standard text in Vulcan universities to this day. Her dictum, "Logic is the cement of our civilization, with which we ascend from chaos using reason as our guide," informed all of her students, especially her two prize pupils, Surak and Jarok. Although Vulcans venerate Surak today as the Father of Logic, he himself always referred to T'plana-Hath as the "Prime Mover."

THE SCHOOL OF SURAK

"The outcome of our actions is entirely out of our control. Only intent remains entirely within our control."

-The Scrolls of Surak

The first major school of Vulcan thought is also the largest. Most Vulcans are part of the Surak sect, which is why so many people believe that Vulcans are devoid of emotion. The School of Surak teaches uncompromising repression of emotion. Even the slightest surrender to the voices of the Inner Chorus is considered a great failure.

To tame the voices, the way of Surak—called *Tu-Surak*—teaches its students to divorce themselves completely from their egos or, as the school's namesake referred to them, the *pach-te*. The *pach-te* is the strongest of all desires and the root of emotion. To explain *pach-te* as "selfishness" is simplifying Surak's philosophy, but it's a good start. Once the student has freed himself from *pach-te*, he will cease to be concerned with himself, focusing all of his concern on the welfare of others. Surak's teachings had a profound effect on Vulcan philosophy and culture. His famous debates with his rival Jarok are some of the most important works of Vulcan literature.

Surak maintained that discipline could not be enforced upon others, it had to come from within. Peace, for Surak, was the foundation of everything worth achieving, both on a political level ("The spear in the enemy's side is the spear in your own.") and a rational level ("The calm mind is the one that truly knows."). "The only noble desire," he said, "is the desire to serve others." He further argued that selflessness was the only way to find true inner peace. "Once you have thrown away your *pach-te*, you have found the true center, the golden river, the lifeblood of the world."

Surak's philosophy begins with the student learning deep meditations, prayers, and stories that remind him of the tragic power of emotion. He learns that morality—reason devoid of emotion—is often contrary to self-interest, and it is this self-interest that interferes with our ability to be better than what we are. In this way, the student begins to shed his *pach-te*.

Surak also told his students to cast away the traditional moral training of the native Vulcan religion, which included a set of commandments not unlike the Ten Commandments of Earth's history. Instead of teaching his students what not to do, he decided to

teach them what to do. Surak's virtues gave students a path to follow, rather than several paths not to follow.

The six virtues of *Tu-Surak* are: Courage (protect others), Temperance (exercise the will), Charity (give when you have too much), Truthfulness (a virtue all Vulcans cling to, connected inextricably in Surak's teaching with logical observation of what is and not what we wish), Justice (the fair treatment of others), and finally Shame. This last virtue is the most controversial teaching in Surak's school. When a student on Surak's path fails, it is because he is weak and he should feel shameful for his weakness. Other schools feel Surak's emphasis of shame is too extreme, but the followers of Surak's path adamantly defend the unforgiving discipline the virtues teach. "Animals have no virtue," Surak once said. "And if we are not careful, we shall degenerate into animals once again."

THE WAY OF JAROK

Surak's chief rival was Jarok, a Vulcan who disagreed with Surak on nearly every philosophical point. The two students of T'plana-Hath agreed on one and only one tenet: that emotions must be mastered at all costs. While Surak choose his own path to mastery, Jarok choose another. *Tu-Jarok*, Jarok's path, sought mastery over the Inner Chorus by embracing emotion, understanding it, and finally coming to terms with it.

The followers of Jarok are not madmen who run through the streets laughing, crying, and shouting. They retreat to the wastelands of Vulcan and face their emotions there, and they face them alone. Jarok's path is an individual one; since no Vulcan can truly hear the Chorus of another, no one else can aid in its understanding or interpretation.

A Vulcan following *Tu-Jarok* is usually brought into the desert by other, more experienced, followers. All sit together around a great fire in silence as they prepare for the arduous ritual. The fire is usually built from a specific wood called *tir-nuk*. The smoke from this fire has a profound effect on the senses of the Vulcan, throwing him into a heightened state of consciousness.

After days of meditation and fasting, the student finally encounters a voice from the Chorus. He spends long days talking with the voice, debating for hours at a time until the experience is over. When it ends, the student has either gained insight or he has failed. Unlike the school of Surak, failure is not looked upon as shameful, only a waste of an opportunity that can be attempted again later.

Like Surak, Jarok also compiled a list of virtues, although his only contained the three which he considered most important. The first, Compassion, Jarok defined as "the ability to see suffering selflessly." However, Jarok's definition of "selfless" should not be confused with Surak's denial of *pach-te*. Jarok taught that selflessness came from an understanding that suffering was universal, not unique to any individual. When the student realizes this—that his own suffering is no different, better, or worse than anyone else's—it is easier to recognize when others are in pain, and that pain becomes easier to comfort. Compassion was Jarok's answer to his chief reservation with Surak's teachings. He felt they left no room in the Vulcan heart for understanding. Through compassion, the Vulcan heart could help others in pain.

The second virtue, Temperance, was one Jarok and Surak agreed on—or so it would seem on the surface. Jarok's definition of temperance differs slightly from Surak's in that Jarok sought it through understanding, while Surak sought it through refusal. Both Surak and Jarok saw patience as an important component of temperance.

The last virtue, Justice, is also a virtue the two rivals held in common. Justice, as Jarok saw it, was the ability for a Vulcan to understand that he belonged to a greater organism than just his own body. He was a Vulcan, one of millions, and it was his duty to help protect and serve that great body. The expression of Jarok's virtues reflected a deeper meaning in his philosophy. He sought to bring Vulcans together, to make them realize that they were part of something greater and to serve that greater purpose selflessly and fearlessly. At his funeral Surak, his greatest rival, said, "He was a great Vulcan with great ideals. And it is still not too late to tell him."

THE SCHOOL OF NIRAK

Nirak was one of Surak's first students and perhaps his greatest. He was also a great admirer of Jarok's teachings, and tried to bring compromise to the two seemingly disparate schools. Whether he was successful or not could be (and has been) debated for generations.

While Nirak did not agree with Jarok's "reveling," he also did not agree with his own master's unforgiving attitude toward failure and intolerance. He taught that the more violent emotions (most notably anger) were to be repressed, but virtue could be found in the less destructive passions, particularly curiosity and joy. However, he still maintained that a high degree of temperance was necessary to keep even the most encouraging of emotions in check.

According to Nirak, it is proper for Vulcans to feel joyful, but not ecstatic. Grief must be let go at *Kal-apton's* gates. More importantly, a Vulcan cannot drop his guard against fear, rage, and jealousy for even a moment. Nirak's school is not as widespread as his mentor's, but it does have a small following devoted to his philosophies.

THE ONE MIND SCHOOL

One of the more esoteric schools, the One Mind School was founded by T'mor, another student of Surak. While her mentor sought a way to subdue all emotion, T'mor struggled with a way to remove emotion entirely. She found it in an ancient Vulcan belief, one centering around predestination.

The concept of predestination is not unique to Vulcans. Many human religious sects also use it as one of their main tenets of faith. Predestination is the belief that all actions and events are already predetermined and cannot be changed. T'mor taught that emotion—specifically curiosity—clouded a

Vulcan's sight, making it difficult to see the ways of the universe.

If the student could throw away emotion, he would be able to see the grand pattern of the universe and watch it unfold. "All problems have already been solved," T'mor once said. "We only lack the vision to see." Despite T'mor's dedication and many thousands of years of development, the One Mind School is still considered one of the "fringe schools" of Vulcan thought.

THE KOLINAHR PATH

While other paths seek to repress emotion, *Kolinahr* attempts to rid the mind and soul of every passion, be it joyful or wrathful. One by one, using the process known as *t'san s'at*, every emotion is mentally deconstructed and purged from the psyche, leaving only the Vulcan's intellect. The founder of *Kolinahr* was a strange hermit who called himself "Sanshiin." His path is called *Kolinahr* after the mountain he sat on during the 277 years he taught.

Sanshiin never sought students. All the tales of his lessons come from those who sought him. It is said that he was originally a warlord, a mighty adept and leader of the feared *Kolinahru* mindlords, who bathed himself in blood every night in a personal quest for immortality. But one day, while sitting in a field of fallen enemies, he looked up at the rock he was leaning against and realized that while millions of men were born, lived, and died, the planet remained. "I shall become as the stone," he said, and began seeking the wisdom he would need to attain his immortality.

The stories of his journeys fill nearly fifty books, but the lessons he taught at the top of the *Kolinahr* mountain are those that are studied by philosophers. Sanshiin taught that all emotion was a trick to keep us from seeing the universe as it truly was. Once emotion was cast away, a Vulcan would be one with all creation.

THE HAKIHR WAY

Descended from a martial order of mindlords, the disciples of *Hakihr* (centered on the Tinsha Monastery in northern Khomi) took to heart Surak's famous saying: "The mind controls the body; control the mind and the body will follow." They practice mind-body unification in the hope of preventing hormonal surges or other limbic reactions that might involuntarily trigger an emotional response. Like the *T'Shen*, *Hakihr* adepts also teach the use of biofeedback to strengthen the mesiofrontal cortex, that area of the brain associated with self-control. The *Hakihr* are famous for their psionic body control disciplines.

KATRA: THE VULCAN SOUL

While Vulcans have all but completely recast their religious beliefs, a few still remain. Many Vulcans believe all Vulcans have souls, called the *katra*, while others refute its existence. Among conservative Vulcans, it is customary to craft a ritual vessel, called the *vre-katra*, to remind the family of the departed relative. Most often made of volcanic glass, *jasif* crystal, or polished *tir-nuk* wood, the *vre-katra* is then kept at a family shrine. There might be hundreds of these spirit vessels in a Vulcan's home, dating back to antiquity. Some older families have entire houses full of spirit vessels, usually far off in a desert portion of their lands. Vulcans, especially more conservative and traditionalist Vulcans, treat these ancestor spirits with veneration and respect.

Commonly, Vulcans meditate upon these ritual vessels, seeking guidance in the accomplishments of the deceased. Some Vulcans believe it is possible to transfer the *katra* to the *vre-katra* in a ritual similar to the mythological *fal-tor-pan*. Just prior to death, these traditionalists go so far as to mind-meld with a friend, who becomes responsible for transporting the *katra* to the individual's home. The *katra* is then transferred to

the *vre-katra*. More rational Vulcans find no proof for the existence of the *katra* and consider all this to be illogical superstition, yet in the spirit of IDIC keep their objections to themselves.

An ancient ritual called *fal-tor-pan*, the "refusion," provides stronge proof of the existence of the soul. This ritual is thousands of years old and has only been performed once during the last five centuries, in 2285 by T'Lar on the regrown body of Spock, son of Sarek. Just before death, if a Vulcan is able, he passes his *katra* on to another while sinking into a biofeedback trance deeper than any coma to heal both the wounds and death itself. Then, when the flesh is repaired (which takes a level of mastery that no Vulcan has reached in centuries, and then only in legend), a Master replaces the *katra* in the newly whole body.

Some Vulcan scientists are skeptical of *fal-tor-pan*, claiming it is merely a powerful mind-meld allowing the psyche of the dying Vulcan to be preserved, or even that it involves projection of memories and not the restoration of true selfhood at all. Whichever explanation the skeptics use, they maintain that the ritual has nothing to do with the soul. Many Vulcans consider Spock's *fal-tor-pan* merely a myth associated with a larger-than-life figure, and deem it no proof at all of the existence of the *katra*.

VULCAN HISTORY

"Father, I do not wish to study today." Stelev said. He struggled to maintain his composure, but, being less than 9 standard years old, a hint of youthful petulance crept through.

His father, Sirak, cocked his head downward slightly in a show of distaste. "As you grow older, child, you may find that one's wishes are seldom the determining factor of a situation."

Stelev was unflinching. "I am sure, Father. However, this day, several of my peers are attending a tour of the Science Academy—an activity which, you will agree, is not without merit."

Sirak nodded. "A most worthy pusuit, to be sure. I am certain that they will find it most enlightening." He noted with some small ember of amusement the look that momentarily played across Stelev's face as he continued: "Nearly as enlightening as you will find this day's studies in history, my son."

Stelev gave in. There would be no tour of the Academy today. However, he would make one last attempt to appeal to his father. "What, Father, is the logic in studying events that lie in the past? Is it not better to turn one's eyes forward?"

Sirak placed a hand upon his son's shoulder and led him into the alcove, where the teaching computer sat at the ready. "The humans have a saying, Stelev. 'One who does not learn from history is condemned to repeat it.' The Andorians, similarly, say, 'A man is no more than the sum of his memories; a culture no more than the sum of its history.' Aphorisms, to be sure, and as broad and general as such phrases tend to be. However, at their core lies a valuable lesson."

Stelev sat as his father activated the computer and began the tutorial program. "Our history contains many cautionary tales, my son." Sirak intoned solemnly. "To repeat it would most assuredly constitute a condemnation." The program began. "To your studies, Stelev."

Despite his best efforts, Stelev felt the curiosity that his father's words stirred within him. Taking care not to show the slightest eagerness, he turned his attention to the unfolding history of Vulcan ....

THE AGE OF ANTIQUITY

It is now generally accepted within scientific circles that the Vulcan race, like many of the other humanoid races throughout the galaxy, was genetically seeded on their homeworld by an ancient race referred to by Professor Richard Galen, the noted archaeologist, as "the Preservers." This civilization is believed to have sown the DNA and RNA chains that have led to the development of similar humanoid species spread the length and breadth of the universe.

Whether the Preservers are the same as the Sky Spirits or Sargon's race, two other seeders of the galaxy, even Vulcan geneticists and archaeologists have yet to determine. Such theorists still disagree (to the extent that they study the deeply embarrassing and unpopular field of ancient Vulcan history at all) even on whether Vulcans evolved on Vulcan or adapted to it, perhaps by ancient genetic engineering techniques now totally lost. Some ancient texts, compiling still more ancient legends, tell of the Vhorani,

or Ancient Ones. The Ancient Ones came from *Vorta Vor*, the Wellspring of Creation, and upon touching the soil of Vulcan the gods transformed them into the Vulcan people to keep them alive in the harsh desert.

Regardless of the origin of the species, archaeology has demonstrated that early Vulcans organized along tribal lines in extended clans that banded together for protection from the harsh environment of the desert. Early in the development of Vulcan civilization, these tribes existed in a nomadic environment, moving from water source to water source. Eventually, some of the Vulcan tribes established permanent settlements at sites that provided food, water, and shelter. These settlements, along the shorelines of small Vulcan seas or in great rock outcroppings guarding desert oases, gradually became full-fledged towns, and, in time, developed into the early Vulcan city-states.

Here anthropology and archaeology fall silent; the endless wars of the Vulcan past (combined with the deep Vulcan reluctance to probe old wounds and shameful times) have destroyed many ruins and ancient records; Vulcan history is a morass of contradictory myths and legends of angry gods, wars in the skies, and heroic feats of psionic might. Drawing from these vague elements, anthropologists believe that early Vulcans occasionally displayed moderate amounts of psionic talent—significantly moreso than appeared among a similar cross-section of many other humanoid races. These Vulcans were probably revered among their people, viewed as being favored by the gods with great gifts. Those Vulcans who displayed such mental talents were considered to be great assets to their tribes and were often the focal point of alliances, as well as conflicts. Every tribe wished to add the genetic traits of these psionics to their own gene pool and gradually, over the centuries, this led to the spreading of psionic talent throughout the Vulcan population.

Competition for natural resources was fierce during these early days, with bitter, violent wars fought over solitary desert wells, patches of fertile cropland, or fish-rich harbors. Some theorists even believe that Vulcan's harsh ecosystem represents the few survivors of a planetary war of unimaginable proportions; the endless wars certainly made the already precarious situation worse. The warlords of the city-states also attempted to secure these resources through alliances and arranged marriages, which led to political intrigues which rivaled the excesses of Earth's Renaissance or the entire history of the Klingon Empire. Unfortunately, any specifics of these stories rest on largely unreliable works of epic poetry, boastful songs and carvings, and extremely tenuous theorizing.

The Tale of Sulen and T'Vhet

One such story concerned the warlord Sulen, the tyrant of Khir'Ahl. Thousands of years ago, goes the legend, Sulen desired the wealth and holdings enjoyed by the neighboring kingdom of ShirKahr. T'Vhet, the matriarch of ShirKahr, rebuffed Sulen's advances. There would be no alliance, and T'Vhet had

Vulcan Timeline

-600,000?	"Seeding" of Vulcan by Preservers and/or Sargon's people?
-4700	Founding of Fort Aba'kur
-2500?	Sulen and T'Vhet
-855	Destruction of Devlarm
-642	R'kaal infestation defeated by Sajik
212	Sudoc takes power in Jaleyl
258	Beginning of the Last War, between Jaleyl and ShirKahr
279	Birth of Surak
312	Awakening of Surak
319-596	Sanshin founds the Way of Kolinahr, blending the doctrines of Surak and of the Kolinahru mindlords; teaches on Mount Kolinahr.
322	Martyrdom of S'vec
331	End of the Last War with the death of Sudoc
369	Romulan exodus from Vulcan
387	Selok promulgates the Theorems of Governance; Vulcan unified
399	Vulcan Science Academy founded
404	Death of Jarok
481	Death of Surak
1270-1370	Romulan-Vulcan wars
1440	T'Vran develops warp drive; Vulcans begin observing other planets
2063	Sevak initiates Vulcan-Human first contact
2080	T'Pau born
2092	Vulcan School of Diplomacy founded
2145	Vulcan-Andorian first contact
2156-2160	Earth-Romulan War
2160	Terran Conventions; Vulcan ratifies the Articles of Federation
2161	Federation officially comes into being with Vulcan as a founding member
2165	Birth of Sarek
2224	T'Pau becomes High Priestess of Seleya
2229	Marriage of Sarek to Amanda Grayson of Earth
2230	Birth of Spock
2241	T'Pau turns down a seat on the Federation Council
2252	Spock becomes the first Vulcan in Starfleet
2253	Vulcan threatens to secede from the Federation over the Axanar crisis
2262	*U.S.S. Intrepid* commissioned as an all-Vulcan starship
2265	Earthquake sinks the city of K'lan
2267	T'Pau officiates at the Koon-ut-kal-if-fee that replaces Spock's marriage to T'Pring; Captain Kirk becomes one of the first humans to witness a Vulcan wedding
2268	Destruction of the *U.S.S. Intrepid* by a space amoeba near Gamma 7A
2279	Death of T'Pau; T'Lar becomes High Priestess of Seleya
2281	Sarek becomes Vulcan Ambassador to the Federation
2368	Attempted Romulan invasion of Vulcan foiled by Ambassador Spock; death of Sarek
2369	Vulcan Isolationist Movement attempts to reassemble the Stone of Gol
2370	Stone of Gol recovered by the Vulcan government; existence of the VIM as a terrorist movement revealed

confidence in her armies. Sulen would not be dissuaded, however. He hit upon a plan that would ensure an alliance between Khir'Ahl and ShirKahr—a marriage. If a daughter of T'Vhet was Joined to Sulen's son, there could be no denying the union. Sulen was relying on the fact that T'Vhet would not wish to subject her child to the furies of the *plak tow*.

However, T'Vhet's spies learned of the plan. T'Vhet had her daughter, the seven-year-old princess T'Peia, spirited away and hidden by a religious order in their temple at Mount Seleya. The matriarch of ShirKahr believed that even Sulen would not dare violate the sanctity of the mountain temple. She was horribly mistaken.

Sulen learned of the deception and sent his army to lay siege to the mountain temple. The priests resisted; the legends say they awakened the very soul of the planet to rip away the paths to the top of the mountain. Sulen pressed his attack despite overwhelming losses. After eighty days of being bombarded with flame and thunder, the clerics of Seleya raised the banner of surrender. Sulen's army poured into the temple, taking custody of T'Peia.

Sulen was enraged, however, at the attempt made to deceive him. He killed the high priest of the temple with his bare hands, and at his signal the elite corps of his army swept through Mount Seleya, slaughtering the clerics until none remained. The blood of the slain clerics flowed down the carved steps of the mountain, and, according to legend, that is the reason that the stones of Seleya are tinged red to this day (although modern Vulcans will tell you that the real reason is the high concentration of iron oxide in the soil).

T'Peia, despite her youth, was a paragon of the virtues of her day. Witnessing the murder of the clerics convinced her that an alliance between the two kingdoms would spell the end of ShirKahr: It would not be long before the bloodthirsty Sulen completely subjugated his "ally." T'Peia formulated a plan. She underwent the Joining, in a ceremony that took place in the highest tower of Sulen's citadel. At the critical moment of the process, T'Peia, uttering the famous words, "For my mother, my land, and my people," threw herself from the tower. The psychic shock wave generated by her sudden death destroyed the mind of Sulen's son, still locked with her in the throes of the Joining. The heir to Sulen never recovered, and in less than a generation the kingdom of Khir'Ahl was finished.

The Tale of the Hatred of Sudoc

The internecine wars between the kingdoms of ancient Vulcan raged across the planet's surface, culminating in the atrocities committed by the most infamous name in Vulcan history: the warlord Sudoc. Which stories of Sudoc's cruelty are accurate testimony, which are understandably exaggerated wartime reports from ShirKahr, and which are merely philosophical contrasts (Sudoc is often seen as the polar opposite of Surak in Vulcan art and political science) no one can say with any accuracy. The following is the best guess available to Vulcan scholars.

Sudoc was a vicious warrior who took the throne of the maritime city-state of Jaleyl by assassinating the previous tyrant. Sudoc's psionic abilities were highly advanced for Vulcans of his time, and he used them all to further his skill as a warrior and a ruler. He surrounded himself with a fanatical cadre of supporters, all of whom were required to submit to regular deep mind-melds to gauge their loyalty. Any of his cadre found to be harboring doubts or whose loyalty had limits were "adjusted" by Sudoc, deep within their subconscious. If these regular treatments failed to work, Sudoc simply killed the offending Vulcan. Over the years, this procedure gave Sudoc an elite corps of zealots who obeyed his every command.

Sudoc used his considerable powers of insight into the Vulcan psyche to craft a style of rulership that appealed to the citizens of his city. Federation historians have compared the psychological appeal of Sudoc's reign to the pomp and pageantry that the Fascists of early Earth history utilized in their rise to power. His citizens were more than happy to turn over their personal freedoms, as long as Sudoc's government kept them well fed, prosperous, and entertained.

The kingdom of Jaleyl expanded across the surface of Vulcan—neighboring kingdoms were offered the chance to be annexed or conquered. Initially, the other kingdoms resisted, until they witnessed Sudoc's barbarity. His armies would surge across the border, slaughtering the opposing forces with no quarter

given. They would then move on to killing entire towns and cities, leaving a single survivor to travel to the next town with the following message: "Your rulers are responsible. They would rather see you dead than out of their control. Only they can stop this."

Needless to say, this tactic eventually worked. Leaders would surrender to stop the carnage or would be overthrown by panicking followers. These leaders would then be brought before Sudoc, who would destroy their minds utterly with his terrible psionic power (rumored to be the greatest of his day—perhaps the greatest in Vulcan history). Sudoc and his armies would add the subdued territory to their empire, and the process would begin again with the next kingdom. For a century, Sudoc's power grew.

Using the most advanced technology available, stolen from the finest minds on Vulcan, Sudoc eventually assumed control over most of the planet. Some versions of the legend say it was Sudoc who assembled the fearsome Stone of Gol, the ultimate psionic weapon. Eventually, only one region of any real power remained to stand against him.

ShirKahr's armies were highly skilled and possessed sufficient technological might to fight the invaders to a standstill. The first conflict between ShirKahr and Jaleyl began a period of constant war between the two powers. Neither side gained any clear advantage over the other, despite the best efforts of spies and saboteurs. The war dragged on and on, stretching into decade after decade of unrelenting violence. It was into this climate of terror that Surak was eventually born.

THE TIME OF AWAKENING

Surak, the Father of Logic. Surak, the Greatest of Vulcans. The man who would enter the first ranks of galactic history was born in ShirKahr to a wealthy, well-placed family. Surak's father, Solek, was a general in the army of the city-state. For his entire career, ShirKahr had been at war with Sudoc's empire, fighting constantly with neither side holding any advantage for very long. Solek had ordered thousands of men into the meat grinder that was the front lines and this constant bloodshed had stained his very soul, turning him colder and colder. Historians believe that father and son were never very close as a result of Solek's cold-hearted distance.

Surak was a child of privilege. The sons and daughters of the wealthy were given the choices that the masses were not. They were spared from the draft that filled the ranks of the army, instead being given the option of volunteer service (which few bothered to fulfill, leading to a small but thriving idle class). Surak spent his days in leisure and study, amassing a group of close friends who experienced life as he did. While the sons and daughters of the people fought and died to protect the city-state from the barbarity of Sudoc's soldiers, Surak and his friends debated the finer points of philosophy, engaged in sports, and generally ate, drank, and made merry.

General Solek was extremely disappointed in the lack of patriotism displayed by Surak and his friends, and his displeasure was the source of many family arguments. Father and son eventually stopped speaking altogether, and Surak spent more and more of his time away from his family.

The turning point in Surak's life came when assassins hired by Sudoc infiltrated the city and, in a single night, murdered several highly ranked generals along with their entire households. Among the victims that night were General Solek and his wife and children—all except Surak, who had been away, taking part in revels that lasted well into the night. The deaths of his family greatly affected Surak, who found himself overcome by rage at the loss. This rage might have consumed him and left him forgotten in the annals of history, if not for one further event: the death of his closest friend, Senet.

Senet had been one of Surak's circle of friends, a son of another of ShirKahr's generals. Upon learning of his family's murder at the hands of Sudoc's assassins, Senet enlisted immediately in the army, as a skirmisher—one of the front-line commandos whose purpose it was to harass enemy operations. Skirmishers often operated behind enemy lines, performing sabotage, assassination, and other special operations. Driven by a burning hatred of Sudoc's forces and blinded by his rage and loss, Senet fiercely attacked the enemy. He was killed soon thereafter in an enemy ambush.

The death of Senet was like an awakening call to Surak's mind. He began to realize the futility of his

rage, and by extension the futility of this unending war. He began to write. As he wrote, his theories expanded—Surak began to realize that the sorrows endured by the Vulcan people were all due to excesses of emotion: rage, anguish, hatred.

Furthermore, those plights not directly caused by excessive emotion were caused by ignorance born of being blinded by those emotions. Surak was shocked at the clarity of what he had written. There, before him in print, spelled out for all to see; it was all so simple ... so understandable ... so ... logical.

Surak began to see that when viewed through logic, all things in life grew much clearer. He began to speak of this among his circle of friends. "Logic," he would say, "is a lens. Emotion fogs that lens as surely as breath fogs a glass." One of his circle, Nirak, argued, "Surely emotion is as necessary to life as that fogging breath." He did agree, however, that an excess of emotion was detrimental. Nirak's theories of emotion in moderation eventually led to the development of the Nirak school (see page 16).

Some of Surak's friends viewed his transformation as merely the unfortunate result of the deaths that surrounded him. They did not wish to hear his admonitions against emotional excesses and couldn't care less about his new logical approach to life. As he continued his discourses on logic he alienated more and more of his former friends, but a core group of followers began to surround him. Their days were spent in discussions of logic and of abstinence from emotion.

Among this early group were such future philosophical luminaries as Nirak, Jarok, T'Mor, and Vethek. Jarok's famous debates with Surak began at this point, and continued until Jarok finally left Surak to meditate in the desert.

Stories of Surak's circle began to circulate through the markets and streets of ShirKahr. The majority of ShirKahri viewed this group as yet another example of the excesses of the upper class. Surely, only the children of the rich would engage in such bizarre philosophy while others of their age fought and died for their freedom. It was a disgrace, many said. This sentiment only grew when Surak and his followers began to take their message into the street.

The philosophers began to deliver speeches, attempting to explain the benefits of emotional abstinence and logical pursuits. The followers of Surak found that most audiences were hostile—they were, after all, speaking in a city where literally every citizen had known someone killed in the war, either friends or family members. From the beginning, Surak and his friends had to put their nonviolent philosophy to the test. Hecklers would throw objects at them—fruit at first, but, when the philosophers refused to yield, stones and bottles soon followed. Through it all, Surak urged his followers to not give in to anger and to endure all insults and injuries with dignity and temperance. He hoped that their example would act as a beacon for other like-minded Vulcans.

During this time of persecution and hardship, those who were not as devoted to Surak's cause dropped by the wayside, finding the strictures of such stoicism too hard to emulate. The most serious devotees of logic and emotional restraint were unswerving in their purpose, however, and eventually they began to find converts among the Vulcans of ShirKahr. After a while, the sight of these stoic speakers began to be a common sight on the streets of ShirKahr. Their message was not yet embraced, but they began to be regarded as a common fact of life in the city.

After a few years of spreading the message of logic and emotional restraint, Surak began to fill his speeches with a message against the never-ending war with Sudoc's forces—a message against all forms of violence. It was during this period that one of Surak's most famous sayings was first heard. During a speech in the main market square of ShirKahr, Surak told the assembled crowd, "The spear in the enemy's side is the spear in your own." The crowd was outraged by the

equating of the honored army of ShirKahr with what they regarded as the monstrous barbarians who served Sudoc. They rioted despite Surak's urging of restraint, and in the ensuing violence the mob killed several of Surak's followers, and Surak himself suffered injuries.

This incident made Surak realize that the average Vulcan citizen was not ready to listen to mere words spoken by those whom they saw as members of a privileged class. Still nursing his wounds from the riot, Surak decided that the people would only respond to action. He and his followers would have to lead by example, not just by word alone. Surak and his followers began to slip out of the cities at night, cross enemy lines, and preach peace and logic to the armies of Sudoc.

Some warriors did stop and listen—according to legend the mindlord of the Kolinahru adepts converted upon hearing Surak personally, and pulled his forces out of the war that night-but others ignored them. In many cases, Sudoc's men killed the disciples of Surak out of hand. Time after time, a mysterious figure would appear in Sudoc's camp and propose peace. Time after time, Sudoc ordered the speaker's execution. Other followers of Surak spread out across the planet, preaching the new way. Vulcan legends speak of the Four Hundred and Four who died for peace, and many Masters still memorize the death speech of each one.

During this period, Surak continued to visit the front and appear throughout the city, delivering his speeches. His message was spread across Vulcan by travelers and soldiers who deserted the war effort. The practice of suppressing emotion seemed to have a positive effect upon the use of mental disciplines, as did the moving of thought patterns into logical lines. (The stories claim that Nirak, for example, was able to restore his body to life with *fal-tor-pan* after being executed by Sudoc personally.) This obvious beneficial result of Surak's practices furthered the spread of *Tu-Surak* throughout Vulcan, opening many who would not have listened before to the philosophy behind those practices.

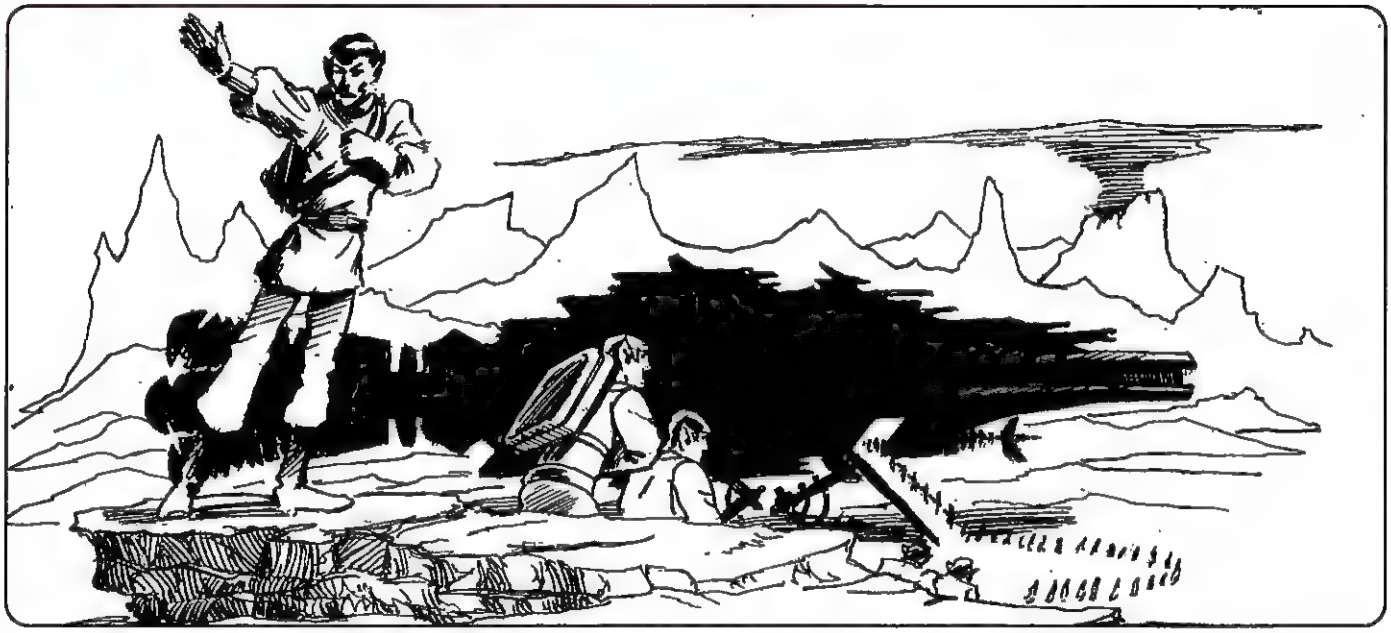
Furthermore, the continuous willingness of Surak's followers to die for peace had a great moral effect not only on the common people of both sides, but on the warriors of both sides, who recognized true bravery when they saw it. Propaganda that condemned Surak's message as the work of effete cowards had little effect on anyone who saw the nobility with which his followers met their fate. Slowly, *Tu-Surak* spread throughout the armies, leading to desertions on an ever-larger scale.

After years of desertion, the war effort began to suffer. The spread of Surak's message had led to unrest in many of the city-states controlled by Sudoc, which had forced him to divert some of his army to control the population. Warlords rebelled against Sudoc, peeling away the fringes of his empire from far-flung provinces like Tat'shar and Go'an. The armies of ShirKahr were in no position to capitalize upon the new weakness of Sudoc's front-line forces, for their ranks had been thinned by desertion as well. More and more Vulcans were subscribing to the peaceful, logical existence advocated by Surak.

By this time, Sudoc had grown very old and found himself taxed to the limit with the pressures of trying to fight a never-ending war, while struggling to maintain his collapsing empire. In one of history's most welcome synchronicities, Sudoc died of a massive embolism during one of his melding sessions with his inner circle. The psychic shock killed or drove mad many of Sudoc's generals and spies, throwing his armies into chaos. The military leader who had brought almost all of Vulcan under his control was no more. His empire collapsed and the war came to an end.

In the vacuum left by the dissolution of Sudoc's empire, many more Vulcans began to convert to Surak's way of thinking. The movement had taken on a life of its own, with Vulcans spreading the message who had never even met Surak himself. As tales of doomsday weapons and horrific atrocities trickled out of Sudoc's collapsing empire, Vulcans began to realize how close to the precipice they had collectively come and with the realization of the fate that they had avoided came the presence of mind to follow the dictates of logic.

The movement swept the globe and Surak traveled as an honored teacher, speaking of logic and of abstinence from violence and emotion. A populace grown weary after generations of warfare were an eager audience. Surak found that even in those cities once dominated by Sudoc, the citizens were receptive to his words, although in their case many were motivated by a desire to fill the void left by the omnipresent rule of the warlord.



Rift with the Proto-Romulans

During this spread of logic and pacifism, not all Vulcans felt inclined to put away their past natures so quickly. Led by a core group of Sudoc's cadre, a group of Vulcans still loyal to the martial principles set forth by the dead warlord segregated themselves from others and continued to practice their way of life, in defiance of the new order.

As more and more Vulcans began to embrace this new way of life, the followers of Sudoc found their situation on Vulcan untenable. They argued among themselves for years, until one among them, known as Tellus, proposed his solution. The Children of Ket-cheleb (as they were now calling themselves) would leave the planet of their birth. Using large generation-model ships, they would hurl themselves into the void, where they would search for a new home.

This idea was seen by the newly logical Vulcans as an extremely dangerous, illogical risk, born of desperation and emotional confusion. The risk only encouraged the martial-minded Children of Ket-cheleb, who viewed the disapproval of the Vulcans as proof that this venture encompassed the true spirit of the Vulcan past. This was a challenge worthy of their warrior spirit—so the Children of Ket-cheleb, hundreds of thousands of them, piled into huge starships and left Vulcan forever.

Surak was saddened by the insistence of the Children of Ket-cheleb that they leave their brethren and home. He tried, in vain, to convince Tellus to find some way to peacefully coexist on Vulcan, but in the end he failed. It was that failure which haunted Surak until the end of his life—despite all he had achieved for the people of Vulcan, his inability to keep the disparate halves together was something that he never reconciled. Jarok often criticized Surak for this failure, and many followers of Jarok have prominent parts in the Romulan Reunification Movement.

As for the Children of Ket-cheleb, it has now been genetically proven that they went on to become the first Romulans. Scientists are unsure of exactly how the future Romulans managed to cross light years to their new homeworlds in slow, impulse-driven starships. Some suggest that perhaps the ships entered a wormhole that has since closed. Others claim it might have been the work of a powerful entity such as the Q, which later events tend to support. Still others believe that Sudoc's scientists had secretly developed the warp drive and that Tellus stole a secret prototype, which the Romulans later lost knowledge of in a civil war.

The exodus of the proto-Romulans left Vulcan essentially unified in thought and belief, and Surak's disciple Selok formalized this unity with his Theorems of Governance, which reconciled the traditionalist past of Vulcan custom with the logical imperatives of peace and world government. The Great Houses, flush with the newfound wisdom of *Tu-Surak*, assented at once to Selok's carefully reasoned proposals. With the Vulcan people unified behind a driven philosophy of pacifism, logic, and emotional suppression, they moved, free of internal conflict, into a period of scientific discovery and enlightenment.

The Golden Age

The accomplishments of the Vulcans during their Golden Age are a testament to the spirit of logical cooperation that dominated the planet after their warlike period. The level of drive that the Vulcans put into their scientific pursuits at this time has been likened by some to a transference of the aggressions that they had previously devoted to conflict. With no outlet for those aggressions, the Vulcans found new challenges to spur them on, challenges of survival, of progress, and of mental exploration.

Vulcan geologists mapped the unstable tectonic structure of their planet and began building geother-

mal plants to harness its destructive force for energy. Vulcan chemists used this new energy source to construct desalinization plants, replenishing the artesian wells of Vulcan's cities. At the same time, Vulcan ecologists put their minds to arresting the steady expansion of the deserts across the planet, seeding new plants and restoring old ones to keep Vulcan's dwindling supply of arable land fertile. These three programs erased most of the motivations that Vulcan tribes and city-states had had for warfare and conquest: For the first time in Vulcan history, there was enough energy, enough water, and enough land for all. The new techniques of hydroponics ended the threat of famine on Vulcan forever.

Vulcan science progressed rapidly as well; all over Vulcan the individual efforts of isolated city-states joined the Great Library attached to the new Vulcan Science Academy. Ancient archives of forbidden experiments, ruined cities full of lost inscriptions, and the top secret projects of the warlords of Vulcan all unleashed their secrets at once in the new atmosphere of peace. Vulcan scientists spent almost a century just cataloguing all this information and cross-relating it. These correlations often sparked new developments, especially in genetics, mathematics, and physics.

But most Vulcans concentrated their energies on exploring themselves. The new ways of Surak, Jarok, Nirak, and others sparked a veritable landslide of study and intense learning about the ways of the Vulcan mind. Psychology, sociology, anthropology, and pure logic grew by leaps and bounds. Many Vulcans became monks or philosophers, debating the fine nuances of *Tu-Surak* and *Tu-Jarok*; some of their schools still survive to this day.

In addition, the development of psionic techniques expanded rapidly. Where once the mental powers of adepts had been restricted to elite classes, now such knowledge became available to all. Children all over Vulcan took tests for psionic aptitude at an early age; promising children joined specialized monasteries or university programs to develop their nascent powers.

Over the next 200 years, nearly everyone on Vulcan developed at least a modicum of psionic control and ability. The habits of meditation, concentration, and calm that psionic development encouraged also worked to cement the ways of Surak until new generations forgot that violence and hatred had ever been options at all.

The Romulan War

The peaceful, introspective Golden Age was shattered by a sudden attack from beyond the stars 900 years later. In the Earth year 1270, a wormhole opened up in space very near to Vulcan, unleashing a fleet of attacking spaceships upon the now-peaceable planet. The Children of Ket-cheleb were long forgotten, and only a few theorists suspected that these new aggressors could be the legendary exiled warrior Vulcans. Fortunately, the Golden Age had produced spacecraft capable of interplanetary flight, so Vulcan was not helpless beneath the sudden onslaught. The attackers, however, destroyed their ships with atomic weapons rather than surrender, and simply ignored Vulcan broadcasts of peace and offers of negotiation.

Vulcans, although pacifistic, were not supine. After a series of sharp, but logically controlled, debates, the Vulcan Council decided to defend its world with force rather than simply evacuate the population to impregnable fortresses beneath the planet's crust. Fortunately, the wormhole opened up irregularly, and for widely varying times. At times entire armadas of the mysterious attackers could emerge, but single ships came as often as not before the wormhole shut again.

The Vulcan Council rapidly assembled a fleet of defensive ships, and logically determined surveillance patterns and convoying tactics that slowly cleaned up the invaders' few bases in Vulcan space (mostly in the outer cometary halo near 40 Eridani B and C). Fighting a grim, silent battle with atomic warheads and logically deadly tactics, the Vulcan space fleet decimated the final aggressive armada far beyond even the binary dwarf stars' orbit. After 100 years of intermittent warfare, the wormhole stayed closed. The Vulcans never discovered the identity of their attackers, much less realized that the long-lost Children of Ket-cheleb had founded the Romulan Star Empire many parsecs distant.

TO THE STARS

However, the war drove the scientists of Vulcan to new discoveries in robotics, atomic power plants, computers, and other technologies. Although the peace brought a reaction and a return to the truths of *Tu-Surak* (for example, the ancient pagan festival of *Rumarie* was abolished after the war), the new technological class continued to make discoveries. The greatest of these discoveries was the achievement of faster-than-light travel.

As in many other cases, the development of warp travel was a cumulative effort. Early developments in nuclear fusion, the original theories of quantum mechanics, even the early city-state efforts in rocketry—all of these were ingredients that led to the eventual breakthrough. However, it was the work, over a period of thirty years, of the scientist T'Vran that paved the way to the stars.

T'Vran headed the research team that designed, constructed, and tested the first warp engine. After the unmanned probe was tested within Vulcan's solar system and proved to work, T'Vran herself piloted the first manned test flights of a warp-driven starship. This first halting step into a wider universe intrigued the Vulcans, who rapidly set about constructing faster-than-light exploratory vessels and moving out into the local systems that surrounded Vulcan.

These first explorations yielded no first contacts, but the Vulcans did discover a small number of habitable, Class M planets in the neighboring star systems. The Vulcans had made planetfall earlier on a number of planets within the 40 Eridani system, but none other than the homeworld was capable of supporting unprotected life. These new worlds offered the Vulcans new lands to settle, and soon Vulcans established colonies on Kethri, T'Khut, and Mevet.

Over the next 600 years, the Vulcan exploration of the Galaxy continued, spurred on by a desire to locate the origin of the attack fleet of 1270. Since the first Vulcan contact with extraterrestrials had resulted in war (unimaginably distasteful to the Vulcans of the Golden Age), the exploration corps had strict instructions to avoid any contact with alien species until all available data could be analyzed.

Vulcan ships may have reached Earth as early as Earth's 19th century, but the continuous wars on that planet kept the explorers discreet and aloof. In the later 20th century, Vulcans cut their exploratory flights back sharply to avoid contact with a brief expansionistic tyranny centered on the star Vega.

First Contact with Humanity

In 2063, an event occurred which changed the face of the universe. The *Vesaya*, a Vulcan science vessel, detected a warp signature while passing through the Sol system. Previous reconnaissance voyages (and Vulcan radiotelescopes) had reported Earth's Eugenics Wars, the launch of the *Botany Bay* and its fellow *DY-100* ships, and finally the holocaust of World War III. The Vulcan Science Academy had assumed that humanity had destroyed itself (or at least reduced itself to a Stone Age), and thus the Sol system was safe for general travel without precautions.

Captain Sevak, a follower of *Tu-Jarok*, decided to follow the warp craft back to its home base—surely, the postatomic Earth could pose no threat to Vulcan, and the chance for new learning and for compassionate aid was unprecedented in Vulcan history. On April 5, by the human calendar, Sevak made Vulcan's first contact in history with another friendly race when he met Zefram Cochrane, the inventor of the human warp drive.

Sevak returned to the Vulcan Council with the recommendation that, despite humanity's emotionalism and unpredictability, he was of the opinion that humanity was advanced enough for the opening of

official relations. The urge to negotiate peacefully with another race won out over the fear of cultural contamination and emotion. Vulcan scientists immediately set out to help raise humanity from its ruins and, they hoped, to guide it toward peace and rationality.

The eager humans rapidly encountered the Centaurans, Tellarites, and Andorians in turn. The Vulcans had known of all three races, of course, but had decided to leave them alone—human and Centauran action unmade this decision, however, and the Vulcans slowly became part of a burgeoning interstellar community.

Earth soon developed a stable world government and immediately sent out exploratory ships in all directions, even passing beyond the limits of safe Vulcan exploration in human eagerness. Although early human ships encountered many different planets and civilizations, the human explorers were vastly disorganized and chaotic by Vulcan lights. Not until the humans and Romulans collided at Cheron in 2156 did the Vulcans find themselves involved directly in such activities.

The Vulcan Science Academy followed the Earth-Romulan War closely; humanity's mysterious opponents used many tactics and technologies recalling the unknown attackers of 1270. Vulcans played an ever-increasing part, almost against their will (Councilor Solkar argued eloquently against involvement), in the war effort as Vulcan scientists and xenologists sifted Earth's records for common elements. The war ended in 2160, however, before the Academy could come to any definite decision. What Vulcans decided, however, was that their planet's destiny and security no longer lay in isolation.

The Federation

Vulcans have long agreed that T'Shenn of Vulcan first proposed a closer union of the five planets at the Babel Five-Power Conference of 2159. Other races differ, however, and the Vulcans would never be arrogant enough to demand credit—they understand that other species demand an emotional crutch that Vulcans have evolved beyond. Be that as it may, Vulcan diplomats like T'Shenn and Suvok played critical roles in the drafting of the Terran Conventions on Epsilon Eridani in 2160.

Vulcan almost became the capital of the Federation, but Solkar and the other conservative elements in the Council ordered Suvok to reject the idea out of hand as culturally dangerous. Suvok proposed that Earth be made the central world of the new union, reasoning that setting the human world as the capital would inextricably harness human pride and curiosity for the Federation.

Vulcan ratification of the Articles of Federation followed rapidly after their drafting, although the conservative elements of Vulcan society warned against too much involvement in offworld affairs. T'Pau, a powerful young Vulcan matriarch, created quite a stir by refusing the Council's selection of her for a seat on the Federation Council, choosing instead to stay and offer her service to her people. Suvok eventually volunteered for the duty, and Vulcan became a core world of the United Federation of Planets.

Some Vulcans were hesitant, especially when faced with the creation of Starfleet. They felt that such an organization would lead to violence and opposed the participation of Vulcan citizens within that service. It was not until the enlistment of Spock, from a very prominent family, in Starfleet in 2252 that the stigma began to fade.

Federation President T'Pavis encouraged Vulcans to join Starfleet by commissioning all-Vulcan vessels such as the *U.S.S. Intrepid*. The loss of that starship with all hands in 2268 caused a new generation of Vulcans to enlist, impelled in part by Spock's heroism in destroying the space amoeba which had obliterated the *Intrepid*. Eventually, Vulcans began to serve in mixed crews, again following the example of Spock.

Events in the galaxy of late have brought Vulcan more and more to the forefront of Federation affairs. In 2368, the Romulans attempted to invade the planet Vulcan and retake the planet of their birth. The Romulan Senator Pardek used the growing Vulcan-Romulan Reunification Movement as a cover for the attempt, which also involved the kidnapping of Ambassador Spock, one of the leaders of this movement. Spock and Captain Picard of the *U.S.S. Enterprise-D* thwarted the invasion, although Spock remains on Romulus to work for peace, aided by those Romulans who yearn for closer ties with their true homeworld.

Overall, the Vulcans support the UFP, serving as one of the major pillars of that organization. Their ambassadors work toward integrating new worlds and settling disputes through arbitration. They serve as the premier diplomats of the Federation, their emotional restraint and logic suiting them well for such service, as much as the spirit of adventure and curiosity of humans lead them into the role of the UFP's primary explorers.

All is not well, however. Some Vulcans have logically concluded that alien influences and associations have tainted the Vulcan way of life. Why, they wonder, is Vulcan involved in conflicts that do not affect Vulcan? The Vulcan people were traveling space long before the humans and did well without the likes of the Andorians and Tellarites. They argue that Vulcan is strong enough to hold its own as a galactic power, without the assistance of any alien federation.

These members of the Vulcan Isolationist Movement advocate a complete withdrawal from all Federation activities: from the Federation Council, from Starfleet, from all of it. Their influence on Vulcan is growing, although the movement suffered a grave setback when their plans to reassemble the Stone of Gol were halted and revealed by Starfleet. What this development means for the future of Vulcans within the Federation remains unclear.

What is clear is that the Vulcans are a vital part of the Federation; without them, what remains would surely be less than the sum of its parts. The Vulcans are, and always have been, critical to the life of the United Federation of Planets.

The Vulcan Goverment

The Vulcan government, as might be expected, is a model of efficient and rational leadership. It makes even the highly regarded Federation government seem chaotic and unwieldy by comparison. It functions so well because it mirrors the nature of the Vulcan people.

Vulcans are extremely intelligent, possessed of great integrity, and, above all, logical. Their devotion to logic and their rejection of emotion make them able to evaluate and deal with situations and crises in a cool, dispassionate way. This not only makes it easy for them to run a government, but to be governed. When one rejects emotion, one likewise jettisons much of the emotional baggage that leads so many members of so many other species to quarrel with and oppose their own societies at every turn.

On Vulcan, government is fundamentally an exercise in logic and rationality. The primordial Vulcans of the Time of the Beginning had governments, of course, some of them relatively sophisticated monarchies or theocracies. ShirKahr even had the makings of an aristocratic republic at least twice in its history, according to the remaining records. As sentient beings, even the violent and emotional early Vulcans eventually came to the conclusion that there are things which individuals, by themselves, cannot accomplish, such as protecting oneself against many forms of violence or natural disasters. Individuals are limited to doing things of individual scope—to obtain many of the benefits of their intelligence, they must act together with others to accomplish more than any of them could on their own. Thus the Vulcans, like the members of most other sentient races, reached a point where, following the dictates of logic and informed by a certain level of self-interest, they concluded that the only way to prosper and achieve greatness was to band together—in short, to form societies and governments.

The philosopher Selok managed to reconcile the intensely traditional Vulcan society, rich with awesome ritual and sublimated drive, and Surak's dictates of logic and peace. With his Theorems of Governance, Selok logically demonstrated the proper balance between local and global power, between tradition and innovation, and between liberty and order. Selok's theorems derive the Premises of Self from the teachings of Surak; this list of "mathematically assumed truths of individual freedoms" (including the right to avoid self-incrimination, the right of fundamental privacy, the right of free inquiry, etc.) is often referred to as "the Vulcan Bill of Rights." From these Premises and from the Six Virtues of *Tu-Surak*, the Theorems of Governance unfold logically. Government thus being, at its philosophical core, an exercise in logic, it is not surprising that the Vulcans would excel at it.

Any government, especially a world government, represents a sacrifice of personal freedoms in exchange for greater benefits, and for the common good—a very logical thing to do. By agreeing to enter into a society, each individual exchanges a certain measure of his freedom and self-determination for the benefits (to himself and to others) of being part of the society. Since those benefits generally outweigh the freedoms given up, entering into a society is only logical. This is even more true when one considers that

the benefits to others (society as a whole) from one's self-sacrifice likewise outweigh that sacrifice. Selok's Fourth Theorem rests heavily on the famous saying of Jarok: "The welfare of the whole surpasses the desires of the few." Therefore, logically one can and should enter into a society and follow its rules. Thanks to Surak, Jarok, and Selok, Vulcans see this more clearly than any other culture.

Since the leaders of Vulcan only act in furtherance of what they logically perceive as the good of society, their regulations and instructions are likewise born of precise logic. Usually this logic is too strong to be refuted or disputed by other Vulcans, since Vulcan's government seldom risks stirring up emotional debates by proposing rules without clearly logical reasons. (It is customary for all laws and regulations to be accompanied by proofs in symbolic logic of their necessity.) Therefore, Vulcans are more likely to agree with what their government does, and to follow its orders, than any other race.

This is not to say, however, that all Vulcans will do anything their government says like so many mindless automatons. If logic meant that all Vulcans agreed all the time, there would be no need for a government at all. It is entirely possible to arrive through process of logic at two different solutions to the same problem—life is not a mathematical formula with only one correct solution. For example, suppose that there is a flood in a region of Vulcan. One school of thought would hold that it is illogical to let people die simply because of an unavoidable natural disaster; furthermore, not assisting the victims of the tragedy might result in the death of a person (or persons) whose past, present, or future contributions to society far outweigh the cost of saving him and the others. However, it is equally logical to hold the opinion that the majority should not sacrifice to save a minority, particularly a minority who were so illogical as to live in an area subject to floods.

Two very different viewpoints, both arrived at logically. This shows why even the supremely logical Vulcans do, in fact, need a government. Indeed, the very existence of the Vulcan Isolationist Movement is testament to the fact that different Vulcans can see issues in very different, but equally logical, ways.

The Vulcan government is generally regarded as a meritocracy, and rightly so. Although the key leaders are elected, the "popular vote" has a very different impact on Vulcan than in any other society. When most members of most races vote, they vote out of pure self-interest—which candidate will do what I want? Who will benefit my interests most? The concept of choosing the candidate which is best for the world enters into the decision secondarily, if at all. Choosing "the right man" or "the best man" for the job also has relatively little impact on the decision.

That's not how the process works on Vulcan. The Vulcans, following irresistible logic, often do not think of their own interests at all when voting. The things they think about are who can do the job best, who is "the right man" for the position, and who will best serve the interests of Vulcan as a whole in the office. This means voting for the person each Vulcan perceives as the most qualified, able, and talented candidate. The concepts of merit and worth thus lie at the heart of the Vulcan electoral process.

Of course, there are Vulcans whose logic is flawed, or clouded by self-interest, so no election is perfect. More interestingly, groups such as the VIM and certain other traditional elements possess perfectly logical and disinterested reasons to vote for candidates who have other interests than "Vulcan as a whole"; even after two millennia, some Vulcans still vote for candidates from well known and trusted families, or for those from the voter's home province.

Or, of course, Vulcans who feel that loyalty to only the planet Vulcan is illogical may vote for candidates who represent the best interest of the Federation as a whole, or of sentient life as a whole. (Many traditionalist voters support religious candidates for that reason.) One group sponsors a slate of candidates who agree on nothing at all, assuming that "infinite diversity in infi-

nite combinations" (IDIC) is as true in government as it is in biology or art. But the Vulcan political system generally works much, much better than any similar system yet discovered—at least, for Vulcans.

THE VULCAN COUNCIL

The Vulcan government is known simply as the Vulcan Council. It is the smallest planetary government in the Federation, consisting of only seven members: the Ministers of State, Defense, Security, Trade, Thought, Science, and Health.

The Vulcan Council meets in the Vulcan Council Chambers, a large building built about 1,800 years ago. It is located in ShirKahr, the capital of Vulcan. The Chambers, as it is commonly known, houses the Hall of Debates (where the Council meets) and the offices for each of the Ministers and their staffs. Although not nearly as large or prepossessing as the governmental buildings on most planets, it is a beautiful example of Vulcan architecture and a symbol to the Vulcan people of the stability of their government and culture.

THE VULCAN GREAT HOUSES

Before the Time of Awakening, Vulcan was a feudal planet with aristocracies of power and wealth. These great houses tried to make their heads warlords, or conspired with other houses to bring warlords down. Dynastic marriages, psionic intrigues, and even artistic trends became weapons in the hands of these powerful clans. Ironically, the rise of Sudoc broke the power of the great houses everywhere but in ShirKahr and Jaleyl, leaving the field open for the new doctrines of *Tu-Surak*, and for the logical government of Selok. Elsewhere, the aristocrats realized that enforcing their will on the planet was a waste; in ShirKahr, the clans agreed on a series of intermarriages that would break their rivalries for all time and allow the lords to concentrate on leading Vulcan into the new age. (Centaurans have been known to observe wryly that marriage in Vulcan went from politics to logic without stopping at romance.) Thus, many of the scions of these ancient families have kept their lands, their preeminent roles in society, and their traditions of service to the province (or, by now, to Vulcan) while actively aiding the transition from aristocracy to democracy all across the planet. By now, the great families of Vulcan play something of a role in traditional politics, religion, and in the hard sciences, but by no means rule the planet.

Members of the great families of Vulcan do not use terminology naming their clan, but simply give their lineage in formal situations. Ambassador Spock, rather than referring to himself as part of House Sekir, calls himself "Spock, son of Sarek, son of Skon, son of Solkar." Four generations is traditional. (Women use the same construction, but with their mothers and grandmothers.) After all, anyone whose opinion is important to a member of one of the great houses will already know to which house that member belongs. Before the Time of Awakening, that was aristocratic arrogance; now, it is simply logical. Ordinary Vulcans either give their name and patronymic ("T'Shanik, daughter of T'Srenn") or politely ignore the subject.

ELECTIONS AND IMPEACHMENT

The seven seats on the Vulcan Council are filled every ten years in a general election in which all adult Vulcans are entitled to vote. Any adult Vulcan is allowed to run for office, but in practical terms, candidacy is based on merit. Only those Vulcans who are renowned for their logic, scientific or technical achievements, diplomatic skills, or other abilities or attainments are likely to be elected. This is because, as discussed above, Vulcans vote on the basis of logic—who, logically, is best able to fill a particular seat on the Council and correctly govern Vulcan? Clearly, the only logical choice is the person with the best skills for the job. Ergo, only the most qualified Vulcans are ever elected to the Council; attempts to appeal to the voters' sympathies or prejudices, to "buy" elections, or otherwise to manipulate the electoral process are virtually unheard of, because they have almost never been successful.

Similarly, Vulcans are unlikely, at best, to decline to follow their elected leaders. Even if a leader seems, in the eyes of some Vulcans, to be ill-suited to the job, those Vulcans will still follow him, since he is the leader by the will of the people. To do otherwise would be disruptive to society, and thus, on balance, illogical.

This is not to say that a truly incompetent leader would not be removed from office—just that the removal would be accomplished by following rules and procedures, not by staging a rebellion. The Vulcans would simply wait for an unfit leader to do something which is highly illogical and/or detrimental to Vulcan society, then have him removed through standard impeachment procedures.

In brief, to impeach a Council member, the other six Councilors must unanimously vote to remove him. The Council can only hold an impeachment proceed-

ing after a majority of the people vote in favor of holding one. However, any Councilor can call for such an impeachment vote to be held at any time, and only a majority of the Council has to vote in favor of the proposal in order for that vote to be scheduled. No Vulcan Councilor has been impeached for seven hundred years, but the rules remain in force: Providing such a safety valve is, of course, only logical.

COUNCIL FUNCTIONS

The Vulcan Council meets whenever necessary—typically on at least a weekly basis, and frequently on a daily basis. Between sessions, each member oversees the departments and responsibilities assigned to him in as efficient and logical a manner as possible. By and large the Ministries and their component agencies function in a semiautonomous fashion; generally, each Minister trusts the others to carry out their duties on their own. The bureaucracies tend to be small, and workers are accustomed to calling on their brethren in other agencies and departments, or from civilian life, if need be. There is little squabbling over jurisdiction or authority.

Political infighting is rare in the Vulcan Council. Each member of the Council acknowledges that the other members are sitting on the Council by right, having been duly elected by the people. Therefore it is not an individual Councilor's position to question another Councilor's qualifications, except in cases of gross misconduct or failure to perform the responsibilities of the office.

This is not to say that the Council does not debate issues; indeed, it often does so vigorously. With so many highly intelligent minds considering issues of such import, it is easy for Councilors to disagree, though those disagreements are usually based on differing interpretations of what is the most logical course of action. For example, one Councilor may decide, quite logically, that what Vulcan currently needs most is to devote more effort to building roads. Another may decide, with equally valid logic, that Vulcan's priority should be preventing and preparing for volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. Thus, debate ensues about what should be done.

Council business is conducted on the basis of majority vote. All Councilors must vote on any proposal before them; by law, Council members are not allowed to abstain from voting. Each member's vote is equal; there is no "leader" of the Council or member who is designated to speak for all the others.

The Council's primary responsibility is passing laws, though they do not actually spend much time performing this function. Over the course of the past 2,000 years, most of the laws that Vulcan needs have already been passed. On those infrequent occasions when a new law is required, or an old law needs to be updated or revised, it is typically brought before the Council by the staff of one of the Ministries. Popular proposals for new laws, or proposals from the Councilors themselves, are relatively rare.

Today, the Council, and the Vulcan government as a whole, actually spends most of its time collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information. Everything from economic and demographic statistics, to scientific data, to military information is gathered and studied. On the basis of this information, governmental decisions are made. It is generally acknowledged that the Vulcan Council is more informed about the people it governs than any other government in the Federation.

THE MINISTRY OF STATE

Although the Vulcan Council has no overall leader, it is usually acknowledged that the Minister of State is "first among equals," so to speak. He has the responsibility for overseeing the Vulcan governmental apparatus as a whole, and, more importantly, for representing Vulcan in the galactic community. All Vulcan diplomats, ambassadors, and other such officials answer to him; even the Ambassador to the

Federation is theoretically responsible to the Minister of State. The Minister of State also operates the Vulcan School of Diplomacy (see below).

Currently, the Vulcan Minister of State is T'Pir, a devotee of *Tu-Nirak* renowned for her wisdom and spirituality. Due to her advanced age, she rarely leaves Vulcan, but nevertheless remains well informed about offworld events because she remains in constant contact with the diplomats serving under her. She also pays close attention to domestic issues and makes sure that the Council functions as efficiently as possible.

The Ministry of Defense

The Ministry of Defense is responsible for the defense of Vulcan. Although its role today is not nearly as crucial as it was before Vulcan joined the Federation, it is still an important duty. The Minister of Defense serves as Vulcan's representative to Starfleet Command, and the subspace link between the Ministry offices in ShirKahr and the cadre of Vulcan general staffers in San Francisco is one of the most heavily encrypted in the Federation. Senak, a veteran of both the Vulcan Defense Force and Starfleet, is the Minister of Defense at present.

The Minister of Defense formulates Vulcan defense policy, makes plans for strategic defense of the planet, and is "commander in chief" of the Vulcan Defense Force (VDF). Individual worlds in the Federation often maintain their own defenses to backstop Starfleet or to defend local space and local concerns like colonies. The VDF encompasses both a small ground force and a largish fleet of space vessels. While many of these ships are assigned on an indefinite basis to Starfleet, which shares much of the responsibility for protecting Vulcan, the remainder are permanently assigned to protect Vulcan. Most of their duties involve patrolling Vulcan space for pirates and similar menaces, but they are ready and able to engage in purely military activity if necessary.

The VDF's ground force, the *V'Ket*, is almost entirely ceremonial at this point; training still focuses on the *lirpa* rather than the phaser. Vulcan's small army upholds ancient traditions fervently, often serving as honor guards for major ceremonies at Mount Seleya or other sacred sites. Vulcan defense planners understand that, logically, the best ground forces in the Galaxy will be helpless if the space force falters, and allow those Vulcans whose predilection for combat would otherwise pose a threat to society to sublimate it in the highly traditional and religious environment of the *V'Ket*.

Since the Minister's functions lie mainly in administration and planning, the actual leadership of the VDF resides in a *f'rel-barr*, or "Grand Admiral." Assisting the *f'rel-barr* is a staff of junior commanders (*ton-barr*, usually translated as "Fleet Admiral" or simply "Admiral," depending upon seniority), who have command of the specific "fleets" of the VDF (Near Space Fleet and System Fleet) or are responsible for other key aspects of Vulcan's defense. Individual ships are commanded by *pelq'ari*, or "Captains." The command structure on a ship is usually more or less the same as aboard a Starfleet ship. Vulcan warships are usually built to Starfleet specifications for logical reasons such as interchangeability and strategic flexibility. The environmental controls differ (internal lighting is both brighter and redder than on standard Starfleet vessels, and the heat and artificial gravity are higher), but most ship architecture is the same.

The Ministry of Security

Often confused with the Ministry of Defense by non-Vulcans, the Ministry of Security is responsible for Vulcan's internal security, law enforcement, and intelligence-gathering. Most of its personnel belong to either the *V'Kor* (the Vulcan police) or the *V'Shar*, Vulcan's intelligence agency.

The *V'Kor* is a small force, as planetary police forces go, since the crime rate on Vulcan is remarkably low. However, due to the skill of its investigators, they are frequently called off-planet to help other governments solve "unsolvable" crimes. *V'Kor* officers make a special study of psychology and emotions, so that they may better understand the "criminal mind." Many Vulcans consider them to be "moody," even illogical at times—but somehow they always seem to get results. Many successful or ambitious *V'Kor* officers enter Starfleet Security, where their natural skills and interests mesh more easily with the society around them.

During most of recent history, the *V'Shar* has primarily devoted itself to gathering scientific, technical, and economic intelligence from all over the galaxy. Vulcan relies heavily on technology both for its defense and for its economy, and thus it is crucial for it to know about any major or important technological advances—particularly those that could be used against Vulcan. However, with the rise of the Vulcan Isolationist Movement (see below), *V'Shar* operatives have had to hone their skills at more traditional, and dangerous, intelligence-gathering activities.

Security Minister Satok is well known, both on Vulcan and abroad, for his skill as an intelligence officer. A former field operative in the *V'Shar*, he has an extraordinarily powerful and disciplined mind, even for a Vulcan, and has put those qualities to good use in running his Ministry. He has been re-elected to the Council four times already, and most observers feel he will remain a part of the Council until he chooses not to stand for re-election, or dies.

Other Ministries

The other four Ministries of the Vulcan government are generally less well known to non-Vulcans, but they are no less important. The first is the Ministry of Health, which builds and maintains hospitals and provides health care to all Vulcans. Many Vulcan doctors trained in the Ministry's facilities go on to become part of Starfleet or other organizations outside of Vulcan.

The Ministry of Thought has what may be, in the long run, the most important duty of any of the Ministries: the preservation of the learning and wisdom of thousands of years of Vulcan civilization. Its network of museums, academies, colleges, art galleries, monasteries, libraries, and similar institutions ensures not only that Vulcan's past intellectual achievements will be preserved, but that future achievements in those fields will be possible. The Ministry sponsors everything from martial arts exhibitions, which resemble stylized dance performances to some offworlders, to Vulcan lute concerts.

THEOCRACY ON VULCAN

Many outsiders look at the highly ritualized society of Vulcan, and the often prominent role played in planetary affairs by such figures as T'Pau, and assume that Vulcan is actually a theocracy run by priests of the cult of *Tu-Surak*. This is fallacious, and represents the common offworld mistake of confusing Vulcan's government with its society and culture. Religious leaders such as T'Pau and her successor T'Lar believe that governments are fundamentally unimportant compared with the rest of life, and with the mysteries of thought and death. Most Vulcans, who personally experience the metaphysical nature of the universe in ways that other species cannot, agree. Vulcans revere their religious and spiritual leaders, and their wisdom plays a great role in decisions about what direction Vulcan society should take—Vulcan's government implements those decisions logically.

The Ministry of Science runs the galaxy-famous Vulcan Science Academy, and monitors scientific and technological developments not only on Vulcan, but on all Federation planets. It is one of the chief consumers of the intelligence gathered by the *V'Shar*.

Last is the Ministry of Trade, which is responsible for developing Vulcan's economy, overseeing trade with other planets, and similar issues. It also concerns itself with Vulcan's internal development in such areas as agriculture, mining, and water conservation. It is the smallest of the seven Ministries, and generally considered the least important.

VULCAN DIPLOMACY

Vulcans helped overcome human mistrust after the first contact, and helped create the Federation and see it through to its current level of peace and safety. Generally considered to be the galaxy's finest diplomats, Vulcans have several qualities which make them well suited to working as ambassadors, negotiators, and mediators.

First, Vulcan logic enables them to discern the valid arguments being advanced by each side in a dispute. Rather than getting wrapped up in the emotional appeal of the issues at hand, Vulcans are able to cut through the nonessential issues to get to the meat of the conflict. When opponents at the negotiating table begin to argue, a Vulcan diplomat can quickly put a stop to the problem by focusing on the key points of each position and discarding the rest.

Second, because of their devotion to galactic peace and security, instead of their own self-interest, Vulcans are widely perceived as being extremely impartial in any dispute, and possess concomitant moral authority. Rather than tending to favor, for example, the disputant who does the most trade with Vulcan, a Vulcan negotiator will not take sides or let subjective Vulcan interests interfere with or influence the resolution of the situation. Vulcan mediators resolve the situation logically to the benefit of both differing partners; in intra-Federation disputes, this resolution is usually for the good of the Federation as well.

Third, Vulcans are supremely calm: Indeed, they never even raise their voices, except when it is necessary to be heard over the shouts of opposing sides. Having rejected all emotions, including anger, envy, and greed, they do not lose their tempers during heated negotiations, nor do they come to identify themselves with one position or the other. Instead, they exude quiet and peacefulness. This allows them to analyze all positions rationally, and often seems to have an effect on negotiations as a whole. Studies show that negotiations and mediations conducted by Vulcans tend to be quieter, and more easily resolved, than those conducted by any other race. Somehow Vulcan qualities seem to "rub off" a little on everyone else at the table.

None of this is to say that Vulcans are perfect negotiators—far from it. Diplomacy itself is not mathematics: There are few postulates, and even fewer demonstrably "correct" answers. The logical course for galactic peace is not necessarily the logical course for a given species, especially in the short term. These competing problems in logic may lead Vulcan diplomats to obsess over details, a tendency often called "Legara complex" after Sarek's legendary 93-year

effort to achieve a treaty with that demanding race.

Like every other species, Vulcans have other flaws as well. First, to many races they seem cold and analytical. Some peoples, particularly those given to emotional outbursts, dislike this "haughtiness," seeing in it an implied criticism of their own way of life. This dislike, even if subconscious, can make it more difficult for a Vulcan negotiator to do his job.

Similarly, many successful diplomats are good at "making friends" with both sides in a dispute, winning authority through shows of sympathy and because they are able to identify with a disputant's problem while still remaining separate from it. Vulcan negotiators cannot do this; they have no ability whatsoever to feign comradeship or sympathize with illogic.

Third, the fact remains that many disputes are rooted in emotional causes. While sometimes it is helpful to have a non-emotional diplomat to resolve them, in other cases it is important for the diplomat to be able to understand the problem from an emotional perspective. Vulcans can recognize an emotional perspective, and occasionally even understand its nature and consequences. But often a true breakthrough requires empathy, and even the most skilled Vulcan diplomats seldom possess that. This sometimes makes their job more difficult. For example, a diplomatic dispute that arises out of a failed love affair or an alliance that breaks up out of jealousy may pose problems for a Vulcan negotiator, who may see the entire basis of the problem as inconsequential or unimportant—which may only antagonize the differing parties. In these cases, Vulcan diplomats often recognize that the logical course of action is to turn the illogical problem over to the Betazoids.

THE VULCAN SCHOOL OF DIPLOMACY

Vulcans who display an aptitude and desire for a diplomatic career usually attend the Vulcan School of Diplomacy, located in the city of ShirKahr. Founded nearly 300 years ago, the School has earned a reputation across the galaxy for the skill and insight displayed by its graduates, who have included some of the most well known negotiators in Federation history. Occasionally it includes non-Vulcans among its student body (especially humans and Betazoids), but the vast majority of the students are natives.

The course of study at the School takes a total of four years. The first year concentrates on study of the languages and cultures of the other races of the galaxy. Every student is expected to master the native languages of the other four founders of the Federation (Earth, Alpha Centauri, Andoria, and Tellar), as well as several other languages. Typically at least one of these other languages will be that of a hostile or potentially hostile power, such as the Klingon Empire, the Cardassian Union, or the Romulan Empire. Additionally, a great deal of time is devoted to studying the cultures of races the students are likely to interact with. The School recognizes that they key to appealing to many races lies in their culture; making the effort to get to know about them often provides valuable insight on each race's psychological and sociological influences.

The second year continues the study of cultures and languages, and adds to it formal study of diplomatic protocol. When one has to deal with dozens of races, hundreds of different types of leaders, and countless different types of meals and other forms of social interaction, it is vital to know who has precedence and how not to insult one's hosts. Naturally, a survey course cannot cover all details (graduates are expected to study individual cultures more intensely before becoming involved with them), but the School covers the most important points thoroughly.

The third year finishes the study of cultures and protocol and advances into training in negotiating techniques. The students participate in mock negotiations, learning the ins and outs of the diplomatic process. In most cases volunteers from other worlds or

professional actors are recruited to help with these simulations, since Vulcans have little skill at acting the way other, emotional, species do.

A student's final year at the School concentrates entirely on negotiating techniques. Professional diplomats from many species lecture to the students, who are often invited to observe or assist with actual negotiating sessions between cultures or groups. At the end of the year, a student is awarded a red-colored official badge marking him as a *troon-arr,* or graduate of the prestigious School.

Although the nominal leader of the School is the Minister of State, the Minister always cedes that authority to a Master chosen by him. The current Master of the Vulcan School of Diplomacy is Sanok, one of the Federation's greatest diplomats. A former member of the Federation Council and one of the key negotiators who arranged the Khitomer Accords between the Federation and the Klingon Empire, Master Sanok is highly respected throughout Vulcan and the Federation for his wisdom and skill as a negotiator.

Vulcan Foreign Relations

The Vulcans maintain good relations with most species of the Federation. As some of the greatest believers in the ideals upon which the Federation was founded, the Vulcans believe that maintaining good intra-Federation relations is crucial. Similarly, they also make an effort to establish relations with other governmental entities, where advisable.

EARTH

Vulcan has had close ties with Earth for centuries, and those ties remain among Vulcan's strongest with any world. Vulcans tend to find humans intriguing, if highly illogical, and often study them closely in an effort to understand emotions better. Vulcans have also learned that humanity's illogical perspective can be an excellent complement to Vulcan logic; this has led to many extremely fruitful scientific and technical partnerships and joint projects between the two races.

Vulcans who have a chauvinistic streak tend to see humans as somewhat like themselves prior to the Time of Awakening. They believe that humans are capable of great efforts to improve themselves, as shown by the period when they revived their civilization and created a utopian world government. To such Vulcans, humanity should focus this energy on eradicating their emotions and making themselves logical, like Vulcans. Other, more philosophical, Vulcans tend to think that humanity is doing all right as it is. Most Vulcans feel that humanity does best with a Vulcan standing nearby, however.

ALPHA CENTAURI

The Vulcans enjoy good relations with the Centaurans. During the conferences at which the Federation was established, the Vulcans found in the Centaurans another race of people dedicated to the goals of peace and prosperity which the Vulcans had already embraced. This gave the two races a common ground from which to work toward closer relations. Vulcans have many diplomatic, commercial, and social connections with the Centaurans, and think highly of them.

Some Vulcans consider Centauran society the model for which Earth should aim: a peaceful, sensible, scientifically organized world with all drives carefully channeled to socially productive ends. Other Vulcans (especially minority members of the *Tu-Jarok* sect) feel that the Centauran civilization is the model for which Vulcan should aim, as it has accomplished everything Vulcan has while remaining capable of openly expressing emotions.

ANDORIA

Vulcan's relationship with Andoria has always been a little touchy. By their own admission, the Andorians are a passionate, sometimes violent, people, and they have not always seen eye to eye with the

Vulcans. In fact, on more than one occasion, Andorian representatives have seemed to take offense at the cool and logically detached Vulcan attitude. Still, the Vulcan inability to feel dislike or resentment because of this, and Vulcan willingness to strive for mutual understanding, cooperation, and prosperity, have always managed to smooth ruffled feathers and keep the relationship moving forward. Andorians also respect the traditional side of Vulcan culture to a degree that even romantic Centaurans and humans do not.

Vulcans tend to regard Andorians as rather dangerous, because their emotions have such firm control over them—even more control than human emotions do over humans. This, however, makes them more predictable to Vulcans than humanity's chaotic blend of emotion and intellect. When working with Andorians, Vulcans are always cautious, taking extra care not to offer insult or cause problems; this works well.

The Vulcans and Andorians have discovered that there are a number of significant biological similarities between their races—enough to make sharing medical information worthwhile. Several "exchange programs" have been established, allowing doctors of both races to interact and learn from each other.

BETAZED

Due to fundamental differences between their two societies, relations between Vulcan and Betazed are not as strong as some might think. Betazoids, who embrace and encourage emotion and emotional behavior (which they sometimes nurture through their mental powers), are in many ways the opposite of the coldly logical Vulcans, so the two peoples have difficulty relating to each other. However, they have found common ground as races possessing telepathic abilities; scientific delegations from both worlds have explored each others' powers in an effort to expand their understanding of the nature of their psychic capabilities.

Currently, Vulcan and Betazoid specialists are planning a joint institute for psionic studies on a neutral planet; scholars on both worlds are eager to share knowledge. The common Federation practice of teaming a Betazoid and a Vulcan ambassador on any truly crucial mission has also germinated a growing respect for the other society on each world.

BOLARUS IX

Vulcans tend to regard Bolians favorably, despite having some differences with them. The Bolians have a strong ethical streak and several highly developed schools of philosophy, both of which appeal to the Vulcans. However, they also feel that the Bolians take their ethics to illogical extremes on occasion. For example, the Bolian double effect principle (any action that relieves suffering is good, even if it causes death) intrigues Vulcans.

This fundamental belief expresses a devotion to moral behavior that Vulcans find appealing, but the idea that even the death of another should not deter supposedly ethical actions is one they are not entirely comfortable with, since extremism tends to lead to illogical actions.

Fortunately, Bolians and Vulcans work well together. This is not surprising, since Bolians and everyone work well together, but the Bolians feel particularly eager to impress and assist the Vulcans. As a relatively new member species, Bolians look up to Vulcans with an awe that recalls that of the first humans contacted in 2063. Bolians can be found all over Vulcan, respectfully studying science, technology, and administration. To the occasional surprise of Vulcan officials, Bolian administrative techniques often vastly improve even the logically organized Vulcan productivity.

BORG

The Vulcans have no relationship with the Borg other than as enemies. They regard the Borg as an abomination—an insult not only to peace, but to individual free will and rationality. The Borg practice of assimilation—the wholesale destruction and absorption of a civilization—goes entirely against the Vulcan philosophy of Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations; for the Borg, there is no diversity, no combinations. There is only Borg.

CARDASSIA PRIME

Vulcan has little in the way of relations with the Cardassians; it does not even have an ambassador posted to Cardassia Prime on a permanent basis. Some Vulcans do, however, find Cardassian history to be an interesting study. Many of these Vulcans not only accept the Federation-Cardassian treaty as a logical contribution to peace, they believe that, if economic conditions on Cardassia are improved to the point where the economy is consistently strong—as was done on Earth—the Cardassians can again become the peaceful, spiritual people they once were.

Others believe that if such a development is possible, it is decades or even centuries away; such Vulcans argue that the Cardassian treaty badly weakens the Federation's flank at a crucial time. Further relations will lead only to renewed war on less favorable ground.

QO'NO'S

Relations between the Vulcans and the Klingons are not very good. The Vulcan emphasis on peace and logic does not mix very well with the Klingon warrior ethic. Nor do the two races do much trading with each other. The Vulcans generally view the Klingons as a potential threat to peace in the galaxy, though the Khitomer Accords have given them hope that even the Klingons can be "reformed." For now, Vulcans see maintaining the Klingon alliance as a logical sacrifice for galactic peace, even if it means tolerating Klingon barbarism. The Klingons, for their part, loudly insist on dealing only with the Federation itself rather than the "junior partners" of Earth that they imagine Vulcans to be.

ROMULUS

The Vulcans and Romulans share a common genetic heritage; the Romulans are descended from Vulcans who departed their homeworld approximately two thousand years ago to establish the Romulan Empire. Since the Romulan Empire and the Federation are enemies, the Vulcans have no formal ties with their erstwhile relatives. However, some Vulcans, led by Ambassador Spock, believe that it is possible to reunify the two peoples peacefully, despite their differences (Romulans are notoriously emotional, and often cruel). They have begun operating covertly on Romulus in an effort to bring about this goal.

TELLAR

The Vulcan relationship with the Tellarites is similar to that with the Andorians. The Tellarites are, if anything, even more emotional still than the Andorians and less able to cope amicably with the Vulcans' logical perspective on every situation. Vulcan's relationship with Tellar is weaker than with any other founding member of the Federation; Vulcans tend to perceive the Tellarite civilization as one of the least advanced in the Federation due to the Tellarite inability to escape the grip of emotion and illogic. However, the Vulcans definitely appreciate the Tellarites' skill as technicians, scientists, and debaters.

Even though Vulcans come as close as they ever can to frustration when dealing with the Tellarite love of argument for its own sake, they must logically admit that positive results occasionally emerge from such seemingly fruitless obstructionism. Although they have no desire to emulate the typical Tellarite contrariness, they feel that there is a lot they can learn from Tellarite engineers, and have been studying them intently for some time. In exchange they provide theoretical scientific assistance to the Tellarites, a trade that both parties seem pleased with.

THE VULCAN ISOLATIONIST MOVEMENT

"A Vulcan is quite capable of killing—for a logical reason."–Spock, "Journey to Babel" (Star Trek)

As discussed briefly above, it is possible for two equally logical Vulcans to arrive at opposite conclusions, based on the paths their logic follows. Logic does not mean that there is only one solution to every problem, or only a single perspective on every situation.

Nothing illustrates this better than the existence of the Vulcan Isolationist Movement (VIM). Whereas most Vulcans logically conclude that membership in, and contact with, the Federation and its members has enriched their society, the VIM reaches the opposite conclusion. The VIM is a secret society of Vulcans who believe that contact with aliens has corrupted Vulcan and her people.

The existence of the VIM first became known to the rest of the Federation in 2370 when it sponsored mercenary Arctus Baran's expedition to recover the fragments of the legendary Stone of Gol). The *U.S.S. Enterprise-D* thwarted the actions of Tallera, the VIM agent in place, and the *V'Shar*

obtained many useful leads on the VIM organization on Vulcan. The Stone has since supposedly been destroyed by the Vulcan government.

STRUCTURE

Although holding unpopular extremist opinions is by no means illegal on Vulcan, some of the activities the VIM has conducted in support of its beliefs (see below) are, so it is an underground organization, shrouded in secrecy. The information that Vulcan authorities possess on it remains sketchy, but the following is generally accepted as accurate.

The VIM is organized into "cells" of three to five persons each. Typically the members of a cell all live in the same area, but some cells are assembled with an eye more toward the skills of the members than their locale—in other words, some cells are given specific objectives to fulfill, based on what their members are capable of. Thus, if the VIM sees a need to penetrate business computer networks, it might create a cell composed of members with computer-, financial-, and security-oriented skills.

The leader of a cell is known as a *b'leth*, or, roughly, "captain." Except in rare circumstances, he is the only cell member who has any contact with members of other cells. By keeping its people isolated this way, the VIM is able to preserve its secrecy and anonymity in the event a member is captured. However, in some cases large operations have required multiple cells to work together.

The cell captains form a so-called "Outer Circle" that meets semiregularly to plan operations and coordinate

activities. This is how the VIM makes sure that none of its cells conduct the same operation or work at cross-purposes. However, the more often such meetings occur, the greater the danger of discovery; the cell system is simply not built for rapid communication between cells.

Every three captains (a *pelchaa*, or "triad") answers to a member of the "Inner Circle" who is referred to as a *b'nek*, or "commander." The commanders communicate orders from the leader of the VIM and make sure that their captains are functioning efficiently. Vulcan authorities estimate that the Inner Circle consists of about 20 members, meaning that there are roughly 60 captains and probably no more than 300 additional cell members, for an overall group membership between 350 and 425.

The Inner Circle is led by a Vulcan woman whose name, according to underworld sources, is T'Parel, though no such person appears in any Vulcan records of the past 100 years. T'Parel is described as smart, ambitious, ruthless, and possessing strong telepathic powers which make it easy for her to mind-meld. She supposedly uses this ability in part to keep informants from infiltrating the VIM. T'Parel is said to have been an orphan, raised in a monastery, who upon growing up and leaving the monastery was shocked at how different from it the rest of Vulcan society was. She has supposedly vowed to make the whole of Vulcan as pure as the monastery where she once lived.

VIM members typically communicate with each other by sending coded messages in seemingly innocent transmissions broadcast by the members to each other. These transmissions are based on tachyon relay systems. By modulating the frequency of the tachyon beam, which does not interfere with the transmission of the "cover" broadcast, they can send brief messages.

One resource which the VIM has that the Vulcan authorities are unaware of is the indirect (and very clandestine) support of a few Vulcan merchants. This is a logical, if somewhat ruthless, move on the part of these businesses. If the VIM succeeds and Vulcan withdraws from the Federation, markets currently supplied by offworlders will be open only to domestic concerns, allowing these merchants to corner those markets and dominate the Vulcan economy.

For that kind of gain, the businesses are willing to take the small risk associated with indirectly supporting the VIM. Most of their support takes the form of information, but occasionally covert assistance in the form of equipment, funds, or similar resources has been provided through intermediaries. The VIM is not aware of the identity of all of its benefactors, though it does know some of them, and suspects all the others strongly.

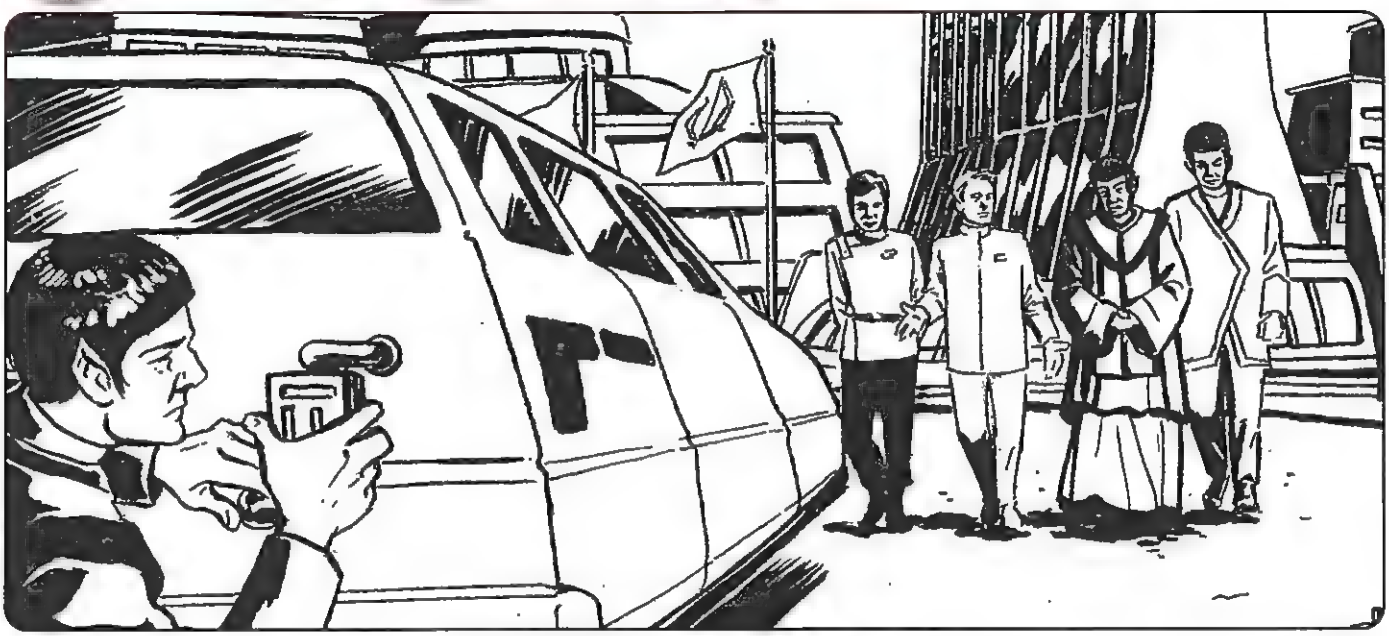
VIM GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

The philosophy of VIM, arrived at through rigorous application of logic, is that membership in the Federation, and contact with the galactic community in general, has tainted Vulcan. From the premise that Surak's ways are best, the VIM logically deduces that Vulcan's problems stem from the contamination of alien, and specifically human, illogic.

The goals of the Movement are to preserve Vulcan "purity" by eradicating all traces of outside influence from Vulcan and then isolating the planet from the rest of the galactic community. Since the good of the many outweighs the good of the few, if a few must die to save Vulcan culture, that too is logical.

In order to restore Vulcan purity, VIM believes that two things must occur. First, all aliens, from the Federation on down to individual Ferengi traders, must be expelled from Vulcan. Additionally, Vulcan must withdraw from the Federation and recall all its ambassadors from alien worlds. Second, Vulcan must thereafter be isolated from the galactic community permanently. There must be no further contact or trade with non-Vulcans, all transmissions to the planet from outside sources are to be ignored, and any visitors will be turned back by a revitalized Vulcan space fleet. The VIM would deny that such proposals appeal to emotional "Vulcan pride," arguing rather that they draw on sacred traditions as laid down by Surak himself.

At first, the VIM preached their message peacefully, hoping to convert the rest of Vulcan by convincing them through logical debate. However, far more Vulcans see the logic of Federation membership, so few people listened and few converts were made. Frustrated, VIM turned to outright terrorism—mild at first, but now much more violent. Its targets are always related to the alien presence on Vulcan: Federation facilities, businesses run by non-Vulcans, starships bringing trade goods from other planets, and the like. Typically it contents itself with simple, if expensive, sabotage



(the idea is to make it more difficult for aliens to stay on Vulcan than to leave), but it has planted some explosive devices and done other things which resulted in deaths.

There are signs that VIM is planning to step up its terrorist activities. As discussed above, in 2369 it went to great lengths to acquire the Stone of Gol, a powerful relic from Vulcan's past. The Stone amplifies negative emotions, enabling a telepathic user to kill by thought alone. Fortunately for the Federation, VIM did not manage to obtain the Stone, but its efforts indicate that it is now willing to engage in wholesale terrorism and slaughter.

EPISODE HOOKS

Here are a few story seeds for Narrators who are interested in involving their Crews with Vulcan politics or society.

CARDASSIA PRIME CUT

As mentioned above, many Vulcans study Cardassian history as a way of finding out about Cardassia's more spiritual past. They hope that the race can be turned away from militarism and back toward such peaceful pursuits. This includes some Vulcan politicians, such as Vitrek, an assistant to Minister of State T'Pir.

T'Pir would like to establish closer ties with the Cardassian Union as a way of funneling economic aid to them—a first step on the road to turning them back toward their earlier ways. Logically, if the Cardassians can support themselves domestically, they will have less motivation for expensive and dangerous expansion. The Federation is aware of, and approves of, this goal. T'Pir has managed to establish tenuous contact with an important and seemingly sympathetic Cardassian politician, Gul Nereg. The point of contact is an unscrupulous member of the Cardassian underworld named Trenag. Trenag figures that if he helps the Vulcans establish greater ties, not only will they owe him a favor, but when the economic aid comes in, he'll be able to skim some of it off for himself. Starfleet Crews may be asked to smuggle small, valuable items (technological devices such as medical nanites, perhaps, or ancient artifacts recovered by Vulcan archaeologists near the Badlands) to Trenag, or to escort Vulcan diplomats to a secret conference. Vulcan parties may play the aforementioned archaeological team, the diplomatic team, or some other group tasked with one element of this mission. Complications ensue if Trenag tries to get a "cut" of anything valuable he passes on to Gul Nereg, or if Gul Nereg is actually playing a double game to embarrass Vulcan and split the UFP.

CAT AND MOUSE

The *Tal Shiar* has gotten wind of the reunification movement spearheaded by Vulcans led by Ambassador Spock. The Crew is assigned to infiltrate Romulus disguised as Romulans to evacuate as many members of the reunification movement as possible. However, most of them, including Ambassador Spock, refuse to leave, since they believe their mission is too valuable to abandon. The Crew will have to help them move to a new headquarters, then throw the *Tal Shiar* off their trail somehow, before departing Romulus with any Vulcans who do wish to leave.

THE FUTILITY OF WORDS

The Vulcan Isolationist Movement has decided that the time has come to strike at one of the most important and renowned symbols of Vulcan contact with other worlds—the Vulcan School of Diplomacy. By wreaking substantial damage on the School, the VIM hopes not only to discourage diplomats and potential students from becoming involved with it, but perhaps to put it out of business entirely.

The occurrences in question are a number of acts of vandalism—broken windows, damaged books, etc.—that have been perpetrated recently. These are "dry runs" by the VIM, which is seeing how easily it can get onto the campus and commit crimes without being detected. Having had little trouble, it has decided to go ahead with its plan. Several cells are supposed to cause distractions elsewhere in ShirKahr so that an explosive can be planted inside the School. Communications between cells are conducted by means of the standard secret tachyon beam code the VIM uses.

The Planet Vulcan

The planet Vulcan has been called a desert world. In a sense, this is true; it orbits too close to its sun and its atmosphere is too thin to retain the lush greenery and vast oceans of its ally Earth. But even on such a desert world, plants and animals grow and, in their own way, thrive. So, too, do Vulcan's human inhabitants. The Vulcans themselves have made of their world first an epic battleground, and now a laboratory for the ultimate experiment in logic and peace.

VULCAN

"Vulcan" is the Federation Standard name for the planet known to its inhabitants in their own language as Ti-Valka'ain. Ti-Valka'ain was the god of fire, change, and the earth in the cults of the Time of the Beginning. His place in the Inner Chorus represents basic urges, not so much the emotions themselves as their results. In his wrathful form, he becomes Ayen-valkathi, the lord of insanity and chaos, of effect without cause.

The coincidental similarities between the name "Ti-Valka'ain" and the Roman god "Vulcan" (both fire gods) led to the use of "Vulcan" by early human and Centauran visitors. Now, much as a native of Cairo would identify his country in English as "Egypt" rather than "Misr" or a citizen of Bombay would use "India" rather than "Bharat," Vulcans who deal with offworlders commonly refer to their own planet as Vulcan and to its star as Vulcanis (or even, less often, as 40 Eridani A) rather than Ko'vel. This book follows Federation Standard usage for clarity.

Vulcan Ecology

There is little question that the ecology of Vulcan has made its own contribution to shaping the character of its people. Today the landscape of Vulcan is mostly harsh and forbidding, filled with arid deserts and stark plains of black obsidian and gray flint and cinder still populated by active volcanoes, fumaroles, and geysers. Water is scarce in most areas, and the flora and fauna occupying these regions have adapted to survive in these difficult conditions. So, too, have the people of Vulcan been tempered by the fires of Vulcan's forge, developing a hardiness and inner strength that have enabled them to master their environment and create a thriving and vital economy, much as they have succeeded in mastering the emotional passions and violence that for centuries during the Age of Antiquity threatened to tear them apart.

How these changes occurred has been a continuing debate between Vulcan and other Federation scientists ever since the Federation was allowed to help explore Vulcan's past. Fossil evidence found on the planet indicates that at one time nearly eighty percent of the planet was covered with water. The first lifeforms emerged from the oceans and came onto land that instead of barren desert was lush tropical forest. With food and water being plentiful, many different types of creatures were able to thrive on the planet.

Then things suddenly and dramatically changed. Federation scientists believe a series of solar flares exploded from 40 Eridani A. These flares ripped off the upper layers of the atmosphere, and volatilized much of the ocean. Without the protection of the ionosphere, and with water newly scarce, many of the plants and creatures of Vulcan began to die off. Within a geological eyeblink the forests were gone,

SYSTEM TEMPLATE

System Name: Vulcan (also called Vulcanis, Ko'vel, 40 Eridani).

Affiliation: Core system of the United Federation of Planets.

System Type: *Trinary*: Vulcanis A (Ko'vel) (Type K1 V, orange dwarf star) is the primary; Vulcanis B (Type D VII, white dwarf) and Vulcanis C (Type M4 V, faint red dwarf) orbit each other at a distance of 400 AU from Vulcanis A. Over the last two millennia, the old names of Vulcanis B and C have been replaced with Surak (for B) and Sudoc (for C), representative of the twin forces of logic and emotion.

Inhabited Planets: Vulcan (Vulcanis II) is the only main inhabited planet in the Vulcanis system, although scientific colonies and religious retreats dot many other bodies in the system.

Other Planets: Ket-cheleb (Vulcanis I) (Class F), Valdena (Vulcanis III) (Class K), Tel-alep (Vulcanis IV) (Class K), Kal-ap-ton (Vulcanis V) (Class J superjovian), and Kir-alep (Vulcanis VI) (a smaller Class J subjovian).

Other Stellar Objects: Two asteroid belts, one inside the orbit of Vulcanis I and one between Vulcan and Vulcanis III.

Artificial Objects: Many astronomical probes and orbiting telescopes operating under the auspices of the Vulcan Science Academy (or owned privately by individual researchers), a solar monitoring station inside the orbit of Vulcanis I, and a Starfleet-caliber spacedock as part of the Vulcan Space Center around Vulcanis III.

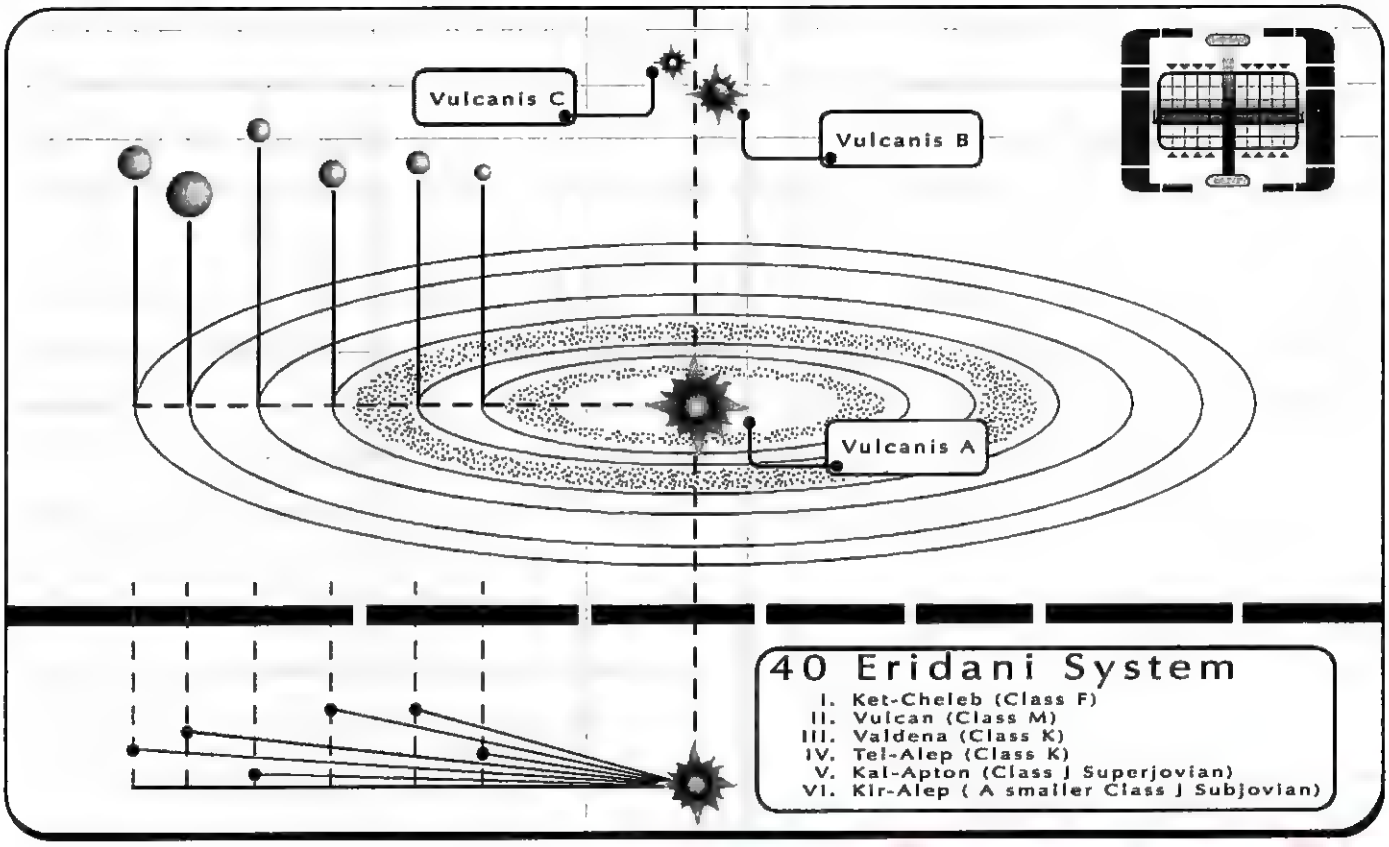
SIS: The home of the Vulcan race.

the oceans had become barren rock, and the atmosphere heated as it thinned.

Vulcan astronomers agree with certain points made by their Federation counterparts, but dispute that solar flares alone were responsible for the changes that happened. They reason that 40 Eridani A, although a relatively energetic orange dwarf, has historically never shown the level of activity that the other scientists believe happened. Many Vulcan astronomers therefore theorize that a small but fast-moving rogue planet struck 40 Eridani A as it passed through the system. Because Vulcan was close to the sun when this happened, the planet not only got hit with the large flares, but also with actual stellar material ripped from the star by the planet's impact. In the perturbations, the orbits of the planets were drawn closer to the star, and gravitational stresses may even have broken up one planet into the Vulcan system's inner asteroid belt. Using this model, the Vulcans not only account for the flares, but also the change in temperature and the tectonic shifting that has made so much of Vulcan geologically unstable.

Vulcan geologists, on the other hand, maintain that internal tectonic activity on Vulcan is energetic enough to explain the changes in Vulcan's atmosphere and climate by itself. They posit that an extremely violent period of volcanism and subduction (possibly following a cometary or meteoritic impact) altered the atmospheric chemistry of Vulcan enough to allow 40 Eridani A to disintegrate the atmosphere. These geologists point to similar periods in the Earth's evolution, when its atmosphere changed from methane to nitrogen-oxygen, or when the ozone layer almost broke down in the early 21st century, as evidence that atmospheric changes created by ground conditions can alter planetary climate dramatically.

Some theorists argue that solar activity could easily have disrupted Vulcan's already weak and inconstant magnetic field, and perhaps even caused a radical shifting of Vulcan's axial tilt. Such a shift, if



timed with a period of solar flares and tectonic instability, could have ripped away much of Vulcan's atmosphere, leaving the planet to bake itself dry over the following centuries. Still more radical scholars hold that a cataclysmic war among proto-Vulcan species (either native or seeded by the Preservers) not only flung Vulcan into barbarism but actually devastated the planetary ecology and geology, turning a lush paradise into a desert with horrific doomsday weapons that focused the planet's tectonic energy or that psionically collimated beams of Vulcan's sunlight into mighty death rays. Although fragmentary Vulcan legends can be matched up to these theories, most scientists reject them as unlikely in the extreme, none more firmly than the Vulcans themselves.

There are still isolated areas across the planet's face which retain the visage of Vulcan's primordial years, when the planet teemed with life. These areas, primarily concentrated in the fertile crescents bordering the planet's great seas, the Voroth and the Thanor, contain vestiges of old growth forest carefully shepherded from harvesting and set aside by the Vulcan Council as wilderness preserves. Here, conservators carefully nurture the many species of flowering plants, grasses, animals, and fish, keeping them from extinction. On a smaller yet wider scale, most Vulcans of means maintain personal gardens at their private residences, either in small outdoor plots irrigated by underground springs, or enclosed solaria with intricate closed-loop climate control systems that recycle every milliliter of water and gram of nutrient that can be recovered. Finally, cities like ShirKahr and Vulcana Regar have set aside parcels of land for public gardens which are popular sites for meditation, as well as tourist sites for offworld visitors.

In these ways, Vulcan maintains its own magnificent diversity, the message of IDIC which it has carried outward to the worlds of the UFP. This same regard for diversity and tradition prevents the occasional proposal for weather control or terraforming to restore Vulcan's original ecology from gaining wide acceptance.

TEMPERATURE AND CLIMATE

First and foremost, Vulcan is a hot planet. Daytime temperatures routinely range from 110°F to 125°F, and in the peak of summer can reach or exceed 150°. The rays of Vulcan's orange sun, 40 Eridani A, usually shine down through the red sky unbroken by clouds from dawn to dusk, as rainfall throughout the planet typically averages less than 25 inches per year and is heavily concentrated in the six-week period immediately following summer's end. In addition, winds tend to be mild except along the coasts, providing little relief. (The exceptions, the continent-spanning sandstorms, provide no relief at all.) Only nightfall brings a break to the incessant heat, dropping the thermometer to 45° or below. In Vulcan's winter months, the midlatitude deserts often experience freezing temperatures at night.

In addition to the searing heat, Vulcan has a gravitational pull 1.4 times that of Earth, and a thinner

PLANETARY TEMPLATE

Planet Name: Vulcan (Ti-Valka'ain, 40 Eridani II, or Vulcanis II)

Class: M

System Data: Vulcan has no moon.

Gravity: 1.4 G

Year and Day: 250.1/27.6

Atmosphere: Nitrogen-oxygen, with relatively high levels of argon, radon, and carbon dioxide. Atmospheric pressure rather lighter than Earth; Vulcan's air is thin.

Hydrosphere: 28% surface water concentrated in two warm seas.

Climate: Arid and hot throughout with little seasonal variation; Vulcan is a desert planet.

Sapient Species: Vulcan, about 1.5 billion.

Tech Level: Level Six, although for traditional reasons Level Three technology remains quite visible.

Government: Representative oligarchy with feudal and theocratic elements.

Culture: Logical, peaceful, and traditional in almost equal measure.

Affiliation: Core world of the United Federation of Planets.

Resources: Vulcan's main resource is its science, and to a lesser extent the products of its hereditary and traditional artistic schools. Both have made Vulcan culture one of the most influential throughout the Federation. Vulcan also produces rare minerals and ores, especially trillium.

Places of Note: Vulcan's religious heart is Mount Seleya, although monasteries and other contemplative centers dot the surface of the planet. Offworlders usually restrict their travel to Vulcana Regar, the largest city, or ShirKahr, the capital.

Ship Facilities: The main such facility is the Vulcan Space Center, although the cities Vulcana Regar and Vulcinis both have spaceports and geosynchronous stations capable of spacedock service.

atmosphere (due to the long-term effect that 40 Eridani A's solar flare activity has had in eroding the planet's upper ionosphere). As a result, the planet's surface receives more ultraviolet radiation from the sun than Earth. Over time, of course, Vulcan physiology has adapted to this environment, providing its people with a secondary eyelid to reduce glare and keep out foreign particles, and reducing the body's daily needs for liquids and other nourishment.

As a result of adapting to survive such rigors, Vulcans in Earth-normal environments possess a physical strength and sensory acuity (particularly hearing) well beyond the human norm. Conversely, humans visiting Vulcan for the first time are apt to wilt quickly upon exposure to these hostile conditions. Protective eyewear (either sunglasses or refractive goggles) is very helpful. Moreover, any human planning to engage in physically demanding activities (such as mountain climbing, hiking, physical training or a ceremonial combat like the *koon-ut-kal-if-fee*) needs to receive regular injections of a tri-ox compound (a standard stimulant available in starship infirmaries, or in the visitors' quarter of ShirKahr) to avoid becoming quickly exhausted and dehydrated. Humans who remain on Vulcan for an extended period find that their bodies will adapt over time, though not completely to Vulcan tolerance levels. Frequent medical check-ups are recommended, as the chance of developing respiratory ailments can be heightened, especially among those of advanced age.

The planet Vulcan has no axial tilt, so that there is no natural progression of the seasons from north to south and back again as on Earth. Instead, seasonal changes occur planetwide as the result of Vulcan's elliptical orbit around its sun. At its perigee, Vulcan passes less than 0.56 AU (52 million miles, or closer to its sun than Venus is to Sol) from the roiling surface of 40 Eridani A; during this time, solar flares can still make their presence felt on the planet, causing tectonic activity in the still shifting plates which lie beneath unstable geological zones like the island continent of Xir'tan or the Fire Plains of Raal. During these months, the seismologists at the Vulcan Science Academy remain constantly vigilant, diverting travelers and mining expeditions away from possible earthquake zones, monitoring the status of over 200 active and many more dormant volcanoes, and coordinating evacuation and rescue activities in the event of a disaster.

Flora and Fauna of Vulcan

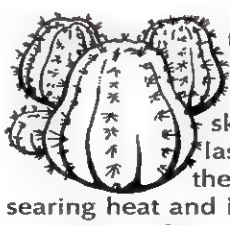
While traveling or living on Vulcan, visitors may encounter any of three distinct climate zones—desert, volcanic plains, and temperate coastlands. Each zone supports many ecosystems, with a biodiversity surprising in such an inhospitable planet.

DESERT

From the equatorial dunes and ergs of Xial and Go'an to the gravel flats north of Nal'shin, desert is the most plentiful terrain on the planet's face. The shifting sands of Vulcan hold many secrets to those skilled in their lore. The greatest of these of course is the art of finding sources of drinkable water in these arid wastes. In ancient days, warlords fought to control important oases and underground springs; today, the permanent settlements, small and large, which dot the ruddy sands have grown around these watercourses. Through the application of advanced technologies like hydroponics, Vulcan towns extend these limited resources to supply other basic needs. Indeed, the Vulcan capital city of ShirKahr sprang up around just such an oasis and today supports an infrastructure the equal of any in the Federation.

DESERT FLORA AND FAUNA

Cir-cen



These squat cactus-like plants are the predominant form of desert plant life. Virtually all types of *circen* have a tough outer protective skin that can be penetrated only by a laser or sharp knife. This skin shields the plant from the worst ravages of the searing heat and is often covered by thorns or spines to protect it from animal predators. The interior layers of the plant store water, and when sucked upon can

provide a brief respite to those whose supplies have run low. Certain varieties of the plant, referred to in some parts of Vulcan as *nor-cen*, are characterized by an outer coating of sharp crimson spines; the pulp-like interior of this subspecies not only holds water but offers a tasty and nourishing repast as well.

G'TETH

A bush which grows on the shady sides of desert and semidesert hills. The berries of the *g'teth* are small, brownish-green buds which can be crushed and used to make a reviving beverage, the justly-famous Vulcan mocha. *G'teth* plantations cover much of Vulcan's low hilly regions, where the bushes serve as windbreaks for other plants and help prevent erosion as well as providing a useful crop.

K'KAREE

Of the dozens of species of poisonous snakes which inhabit the Vulcan desert, sunning themselves by day and hunting by night, this serpent with its mottled blue-gray skin is one of the most distinctive. When the *k'karee* coils to strike, two sacs located below its throat expand outward, creating the appearance of a small pair of silvery fins and giving it the ability to project its venom in a concentrated spray with an effective range of up to 5 meters. The *k'karee's* poison is not in itself fatal to humans or Vulcans, but it can temporarily paralyze a limb (for 24-48 hours) or cause blindness if it hits its target in the eyes. Either can leave a victim an inviting target to further attacks by the snake or by other predators in the area, unless proper antitoxins can be promptly applied.

K'KAREE TEMPLATE

TYPE: POUNCING HUNTER

SIZE: 2 METERS

FORM: BLUE-GRAY SERPENT

ATTRIBUTES: FITNESS 2 (STRENGTH -6, VITALITY +1), COORDINATION 4 (REACTION +2, DEXTERITY +3), PRESENCE 1, INSTINCT 1

BASE MOVEMENT: 8

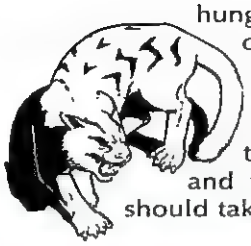
RESISTANCE: 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES/UNUSUAL SKILLS: ENHANCED "VISION" (HEAT SENSING)

WEAPONS: SPITTING POISON 4 (STUNS ANY LIMB HIT, BLINDS IF EYES HIT)

LE-MATYA

A fierce orange-skinned hunting cat that inhabits various regions on Vulcan, the *le-matya* is known for its lightning-fast reflexes and poison-tipped fangs. The cats are known to attack anything they see or smell. The deadly nerve toxins in their fangs can kill a small animal within minutes, or paralyze a human. Because they attack anything they encounter whether they are



hungry or not, no *le-matya* are allowed on any of Vulcan's nature preserves; if one ranges onto a preserve it is removed as quickly as possible. *Le-matya* are known to live in the deserts near ShirKahr, and travelers beyond the city's walls should take care.

LE-MATYA TEMPLATE

TYPE: POUNCING HUNTER

SIZE: 10-15 KG, 1 METER LONG

FORM: QUADRUPED, ORANGE SKIN, LARGE EARS, FANGED

ATTRIBUTES: FITNESS 3 (STRENGTH -3, VITALITY +2), COORDINATION 5 (REACTION +6), PRESENCE 2, INSTINCT 3 (FEROCITY +2, PERCEPTION +2)

BASE MOVEMENT: 14/30

RESISTANCE: 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES/UNUSUAL SKILLS: NIGHT VISION (+2), EXCELLENT HEARING (+2)

WEAPONS: POISON FANGS 4, 1D6 PLUS POISON (3D6 WOUND LEVELS OVER A 20-MINUTE PERIOD)

SHAVOKH

This graceful hunting bird with gold and brown feathers has a massive 2.5-meter-wide wingspan and a powerful musculature that allows it to propel itself along the mild wind currents of Vulcan's atmosphere. Although the bird possesses two pairs of sharp golden talons and is carnivorous, its prey consists of small rodents and reptiles, and it is no threat to the humanoid inhabitants of Vulcan. Indeed, desert dwellers hold that it is good luck to encounter a *shavokh* when traveling through unfamiliar lands, for where it descends to ground, one will find ground water or a soak not too deeply buried nearby.

SHAVOKH TEMPLATE

TYPE: CHASING HUNTER

SIZE: 6 KG, 2.5 METER WINGSPAN

FORM: TWO LARGE WINGS, FOUR LEGS, CRESTED HEAD

ATTRIBUTES: FITNESS 3 (STRENGTH -2, VITALITY +4), COORDINATION 3 (DEXTERITY +2, REACTION +2), PRESENCE 2, INSTINCT 1 (FEROCITY +3, PERCEPTION +5)

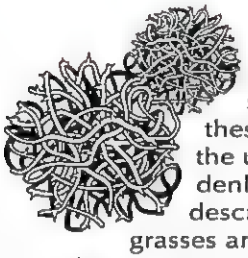
BASE MOVEMENT: 3 (GROUND), 20/40 (FLIGHT/DIVE)

RESISTANCE: 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES/UNUSUAL SKILLS: FLIGHT, EXCELLENT SIGHT (+2)

WEAPONS: TALONS 3, 1+1D6

Sir-soss'im



There are many who say that the *sir-soss'im* are the stuff of legend. Yet, in nearly every village, one can encounter tales of poor souls who were devoured by these will-o'-the-wisps that prey on the unsuspecting and then just as suddenly are gone. The *sir-soss'im* are described as child-sized balls of loose grasses and brush, not unlike tumbleweeds from the western prairies of North America, which travel in packs and possess a group intelligence. The stories say that fire is the only defense against their assault.

VOLCANIC PLAINS

There are two vastly different types of volcanic plains which visitors may encounter on Vulcan—the blasted wastes formed by centuries of past volcanic activity in areas presently considered dormant, like the Cheleb-kor desert and the Womb of Fire; and the shifting plateaus that surround still-active volcanoes like Mt. Tarhana or the triple peaks of T'raan, T'riall, and T'regar in Raal, and teem with strange forms of life that somehow bloom in the midst of searing heat and intense pressure. The terrain of the former is harsh and foreboding, twisted ridges of gray flint, red rock, and black lava flows interspersed with yellow sulfurous deposits and patches of brilliant green lichen. Few possessed of their sanity inhabit such realms, and even short-term visitors should come equipped with appropriate survival gear, and would be well advised to stay clear of most of the indigenous plants and animals which have evolved the means to survive there.

The living and constantly changing plains surrounding major active volcanoes, on the other hand, attract many visitors, ranging from scientists and tourists seeking to observe the marvelous multicolored crystalline formations that grow from the rocks on the Fire Plains of Raal, to expedition and excavation teams seeking to harvest the rich mineral deposits contained within the lava flows between eruptions. Some of the major temples of Vulcan are also located along the more stable outskirts of these plains, as a constant reminder of the powerful primal energies that sects like the followers of *Kolinahr* seek to master.

FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE VOLCANIC PLAINS

Gal-en-du'un ("Dream Moss")

This yellowish-green lichen, when consumed (either by ingestion or by burning it and breathing in its fumes), causes strong hallucinations which last several minutes in duration. Dream moss was used in ancient times by ecstatic priests to induce revelatory visions. Interestingly, its effect on Vulcans is much stronger than its effect on humans. Its modern uses are restricted to medicine, as a number of Vulcan analgesic and neurochemical treatments use *gal-en-du'un* essence.

Le-matya

While already well known for its aggressive nature and poisoned fangs, *le-matya* that live in the volcanic plains tend to be larger and even more aggressive toward Vulcans and offworlders they may encounter, killing solely so they can drink the blood of their victims. Specimens as large as 90 kilograms have been reported in the vicinity of the Cheleb-khor desert.

VOLCANIC PLAINS LE-MATYA TEMPLATE

Type: Pouncing hunter

Size: 75+ kg, 2 meters long

Form: Quadruped, orange skin, large ears, fanged

Attributes: Fitness 4 (Vitality +4), Coordination 4 (Reaction +4), Presence 4, Instinct 2 (Ferocity +4, Perception +2)

Base Movement: 16/40

Resistance: 8

Special Abilities/Unusual Skills: Night Vision (+2), Excellent Hearing (+2)

Weapons: Poison fangs 4, 2d6 plus poison (3d6 wound levels over a 20-minute period); Claws 3 (3+2d6)

Pel-tar'uk

These low-lying bright green shrubs produce small olive-green berries which are edible by Vulcans and humans. However, these berries are protected by thick toxic spines which can tear through normal clothing or robes and inject a painful neural poison which causes cramping and vomiting. The poison then induces a strength-sapping fever which fogs the mind and slows the reflexes. These spines, if carefully removed intact, are sturdy enough to be used as darts in a blowgun or flechette weapon.

Shatarr

Poisonous lizards that live under rocks or in small caves and burrows, *shatarr* are known for striking out at prey or intruders who pass near the entrance to their homes. Specimens can grow as large as two meters, and the larger ones have been known to attack human-sized prey. *Shatarr* poison is a neurotoxin that quickly attacks the victim's nervous system, causing massive muscle spasms. For the small animals that are its usual prey, death occurs within minutes. If a

larger animal or Vulcan is bitten the poison requires more time to take effect, but this gives the victim an hour at most to seek treatment.

SHATARR TEMPLATE

TYPE: POUNCING HUNTER

SIZE: UP TO 2 METERS

FORM: MOTTLED SIX-LEGGED LIZARD

ATTRIBUTES: FITNESS 1 (STRENGTH -6, VITALITY +1), COORDINATION 3 (REACTION +2, DEXTERITY +3), PRESENCE 1, INSTINCT 1

BASE MOVEMENT: UP TO 10/15

RESISTANCE: 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES/UNUSUAL SKILLS: NONE

WEAPONS: BITE 3 (2 POINTS, 2 POINTS OF STUN EVERY FIVE MINUTES UNTIL TREATED OR INCAPACITATED)

TIR-NUK

This small succulent tree, similar in general shape to the Earth ajouga, grows in the cracks between slabs of igneous rock, sending rootlets throughout the subsoil to flower and spread wherever the right conditions of rich volcanic ash and briefly open artesian water tables meet. Some *tir-nuk* patches extend invisibly under lava flows for tens of kilometers, with only a few patches emerging from narrow ravines far apart. The *tir-nuk* grows and dies rapidly, and its sap contains spores that reseed its root system wherever they touch soil. The wood of the *tir-nuk* burns with a bright, colorful, irregular flame as sections of spore-sap flare up, explode, and drop down. The fumes, like those of dream moss, have a psychotropic impact on Vulcan physiologies.

VALIT

This small rust-colored burrowing rodent has powerful claws capable of digging through the hardest soils or even volcanic rock. It lives in large family units in vast underground complexes and emerges onto the surface world only at night. The creatures are highly intelligent, and xenobiologists at the Academy have recently begun experimenting with domesticating the creatures. The name of the *valit* is also used to describe a computer program that is used to "burrow" past security interfaces and provide unauthorized access into a system's data core.

TEMPERATE ZONES

The temperate zones of Vulcan tend to be concentrated along the coastlines of Vulcan's two great seas, the Voroth and the Thanor, but can also be found in the northern latitudes of Tat'sahr province, the Na'ree River region, and isolated mountain valleys on both major continents. In all, these zones comprise less than ten percent of Vulcan's land mass, but house almost forty percent of its population. Much of the economic life of Vulcan centers here—the trade ports which once housed great sailing vessels and now conduct the operations of Vulcan's mercantile starship fleet, the virtually fully automated microchip and pharmaceutical manufacturing complexes, and the sparse but immaculately tended farmlands where tropical food crops can still be organically grown.

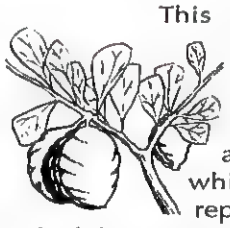
Yet it must be remembered that the very term "temperate" is defined within the Vulcan context. Water is more plentiful in these areas—typically systems of underground streams, but occasionally rivers or shallow lakebeds that fill during the brief rainy season, and dry out over the course of the following year. The water supplies support more varied vegetation, including palm and nut trees, slender grasses, and even colorful flowers like the *y'ranth* and the *favinit* plant. But the temperatures here still routinely top one hundred degrees, and the fragile balance of the ecosystem is now maintained only through the most strictly managed system of irrigation, crop rotation, and recycling.

TEMPERATE FLORA AND FAUNA

CHKARIYA

A weasel-like animal that eats fruit, carrion, and the occasional small animal, the *chkariya* has two large forepaws, which it uses to climb and dig. Unlike the weasels of Earth, the *chkariya* is active during the day, often foraging for food. They are one of the favorite animals at nature preserves, as they will take pieces of fruit from a person's hands. One should be careful in doing so, however, as any fast movements or loud noises will cause the *chkariya* to raise its front paws, and each paw has six razor-sharp claws.

GESPAR



This native fruit tastes like a cross between a pineapple and the Rigellian *kir*—tangy and piquant. The *gespar* is eaten by splitting its reddish-pink outer coating in two and removing the center seed pod, which is customarily saved for replanting. Since ancient times, the rind of the *gespar* has been used in the manufacture of soaps and perfume.

SEHLAT

The *sehlat* holds the same omnivorous ecological niche in Vulcan's mountains and woods that the bear does on Earth. Its six-inch fangs are used almost as much to penetrate thick rinds or uproot stubborn

grasses as to bring down small herd animals or other prey. *Sehlat* are roughly bobcat-shaped, although the largest can stand 1.5 meters tall at the shoulder. *Sehlat* are pack animals, although they hunt individually as often as not. Domesticated very early in Vulcan's history, they have been used as hunting beasts, guard animals, and (by now almost entirely) pets. Wild *sehlat* can only be found in the farthest northern reaches of Tat'sahr and Kel or in the T'ralor Preserve. Their furry coat, which ranges from gold and reddish-orange to gray or even black, actually insulates them from Vulcan's heat.

SEHLAT TEMPLATE

Type: Chasing hunter

Size: 1-2.5 meters long, 70-350 kg

Form: Quadruped, furry, with large ears and six-inch fangs

Attributes: Fitness 4 (Strength +2, Vitality +5), Coordination 3 (Reaction +1, Dexterity +2), Presence 4 (Empathy +2 [domesticated]), Instinct 4 (Ferocity +1 [domesticated] or +3 [wild], Perception +1)

Base Movement: 10/25

Resistance: 11

Special Abilities/Unusual Skills: Excellent Chemoreception (+1), Excellent Hearing (+2)

Weapons: Claws 4 (4+3D6), Bite 3 (4+2D6)

Geography

Vulcan has three continents (see map, pp. 90-91). Two of these, Na'nam and Han-shir, are enormous land masses each divided into a number of provinces with boundaries dating back to the Age of Antiquity. The third continent, Xir'tan, is an island somewhat larger than the Earth continent of Australia. Xir'tan is the most tectonically unstable land mass on the planet, with frequent earthquake activity and over forty active volcanoes among its jagged hills. The island is in fact too unstable to serve as a permanent home for more than a handful of Vulcans. However, the constant seismic activity makes Xir'tan an important source of needed metals and minerals. Vulcan legend once said that a wanderer could simply pluck *kevas* stones the size of fists off the ground in Xir'tan. Now both the Vulcan Mining Institute and private companies constantly assemble X-teams (exploration and excavation) to locate and work these veins as they appear.

One small settlement on the northern coast of the continent, K'lan-ne ("New K'lan"), serves as an embarkation/drop-off point and resupply center for expeditions. All the structures in K'lan-ne are less than a century old, as the former settlement site of K'lan sank beneath the sea in an enormous earthquake in 2265. K'lan-ne tends to attract the "misfits" of Vulcan society for whom the way of Surak is not completely satisfying, including many adherents of *Tu-Jarok*.

Of the remaining continents, the larger land mass of Na'nam contains Vulcan's capital city of ShirKahr, the spaceport city of Vulcana Regar, and important religious landmarks like Mount Seleya and the Plateau of Tai-la. The major provinces of this continent are described in greater detail in the following sections.

The lands of Han-shir are similar to the provinces of Na'nam in most respects. This continent contains three major population centers of its own (Da-leb, Kwil'inor, and Vulcinis) and the T'ralor Preserve on the west coast of the Voroth Sea, the largest wilderness area on the planet. The Preserve contains the last living examples of over 100 otherwise extinct species of Vulcan plants, trees, and animals. Vulcinis also has a busy spaceport, and houses Vulcan's starship production facilities, which employ advanced construction alloys synthesized in the orbital space stations that ring the planet. Finally, vast arrays of solar collectors located in Han-shir's central desert, the Go'an, run enormous generators which supply power to most of the continent.

The Provinces of Na'nam

Na'nam, like its sister continent of Han-shir, is divided into provinces: Gol, Khomi, Kir, Raal, Xial, Shi'al, and Tat'sahr. Long ago, in the Age of Antiquity before the Awakening, these were independent kingdoms ruled by warlords. These tyrants spent much of their time battling over their boundaries, occasionally assisted by the mindlords of psionic monasteries or research communities. The warlords and mindlords often possessed deadly mental powers and energy weapons that amplified them. These political divisions have continued on in a somewhat more aggregated form throughout history, though today the provincial designations are primarily administrative in nature, governing matters like the voting for Vulcan Council seats, the distribution of emergency services to disaster areas, or the allocation of placements into the Vulcan Science Academy or—in the unlikely event of war—Vulcan's national militia.

GOL

The province of Gol is located in the southwest corner of Na'nam, below Raal and Xial. It is bordered to the west by the Straits of Ha'zen, a shallow channel of water between Na'nam and the island continent of Xir'tan whose waters are considered extremely difficult to navigate due to the almost constant shifting of the tectonic plates beneath them.

Although a few small settlements and thin strips of arable farmland dot this coastline, most of the province consists of untamed desert wastes like no other on Vulcan. Whether because of its proximity to Xir'tan or its own unsettled seismology, the deserts of Gol are greatly affected by the solar flare activity of 40 Eridani A, experiencing massive, lightning-suffused

sandstorms that can last for weeks. Desert settlements are therefore limited to a few scattered caravanserai located in spots offering natural protection, such as nearby underground caves.

Though planetary satellites confirm that valuable mineral deposits (especially of trillium) hide well below the surface of Gol, Vulcan scientists have not yet determined a means of extracting these minerals without unsatisfactory risk of personnel and equipment. Thus, the area remains the most economically backward on the continent, and a Vulcan seeking to make his fortune would do well to move elsewhere to achieve it. However, Gol does draw its share of visitors who come in search of ancient knowledge—whether it be Vulcans who have come to study and perhaps commit themselves fully to the way of *Kolinahr*, or the mixture of Vulcans and offworlders who travel to the little village of Xen'tal to enroll in the Vulcan Institute of Defensive Arts.

Episode Hook: The City from the Beginning of Forever

After a particularly severe round of solar flare activity, Vulcan satellite photos of the island of Xir'tan show a startling sight—evidence of a ruined city deep in the continent's interior, where no Vulcan stronghold was ever believed to have been located. This news, which leaks to the public comm channels, sends the planet's archeologists and historians into their musty ancient records to attempt to identify this locale. Meanwhile, the mining consortia, Ferengi fortune hunters, and the Vulcan government scurry to organize expeditions to salvage whatever items of value might be found there. The complications surrounding the situation as it progresses are twofold. First, thermoluminescent dating of the ruins reveals that they date back to the time period in which Xir'tan was still part of the Na'nam land mass: literally millions of years ago. Architectural details, on the other hand, identify the city as the 10,500-year-old lost city of Va'rak Pe-Lau—a dark fortress whose mindlords were rumored to have engaged in evil rituals that warped time itself and brought about their ultimate demise. Second, the tectonics of the area are unstable enough that another flare-inspired quake will pull the entire site back underground a few days after the first expedition actually reaches the ruins. This starts a race against time, against rivals (perhaps including the VIM or Romulan spies), against nature, and against whatever enigma has brought the dark city to the surface again.

Places and Persons of Note in Gol

Kolinahru Monastery

The *Kolinahru* Monastery rests in a high cleft on Mount Kolinahr, the highest peak in Gol. In ancient times, the *Kolinahru* ranked among the most powerful and cruel adepts on the face of the planet. Their mindlords were capable of killing an enemy by making his blood literally boil in his veins through pyrokinesis. Their wanton acts of individual or mass mind control spawned dark legends that still live today.

During the Time of the Awakening, however, the High Master of the *Kolinahru* became an adherent of Surak, and turned the studies of the order away from war to the practice of total mind control. Sanshiin, as he then called himself, carved the new *Kolinahru* retreat out of the bedrock of the desert to render it a safe haven from the sandstorms and intense heat. He then forbade the further use of any manner of advanced technology within its walls.

Today, the acolytes and adepts of *Kolinahr* have adopted an ascetic and simple lifestyle, using oil lamps and quill pens instead of electricity and computers; raising simple hand-tended crops on a small, sandy plot of communal land; and bathing in the natural hot springs that lie beneath the lower level of the monastery. Guests—Vulcan and offworlder alike—are welcome here at any time to rest and meditate in privacy. However, they must leave their vehicles in a shelter about a mile from the complex, and leave any hand-held items of personal technology (including computers, PADD's, and even sonic shavers) behind in the front reception area until they depart.

There is one portion of the monastery which is not open to the general public, however. The Hall of Ancient Thought, a subterranean chamber eternally guarded by members of the order, contains the *vrekatra* of the former High Masters of the Order. If some of these ancient funereal vessels indeed contain the *katra* of *Kolinahr's* previous High Masters, as the leg-

ends claim, then those dating back to before the Time of Awakening would be none too pleased if they were somehow awakened and shown their current surroundings, or learned the philosophy their order now practices.

Plateau of Tai-la

The final ritual to purge a *Kolinahri* acolyte of all emotion takes place at this desolate plateau outside the *Kolinahru* monastery. The ceremony follows a ten-day period of leavetaking, in which the acolyte is allowed to leave the monastery and meet with as many of his lifetime friends as possible to bring closure to their memories. He then travels alone into the desert, carrying only the robe on his back and a waterskin, and enters a deep meditative trance, casting out all remaining emotion into the surrounding sands.

The ritual can take days or even weeks to complete, and ends only when the High Master, who telepathically monitors the progress of the ceremony throughout, either determines that the cleansing of the new adept's mind has been completed, or that the acolyte's life is in danger. Some adherents have gone through the ceremony several separate times without ever successfully breaking free of the bonds of emotion.

Vulcan Institute of Defensive Arts

The VIDA occupies a complex of unassuming low stone buildings and amphitheaters in the tiny village of Xen'tal in southeastern Gol. Indeed, the entire village contains little more than the Institute, a small shuttle port and transporter center, and an inn that houses short-term students and visiting instructors. At the Institute, one can obtain training in Vulcan martial arts techniques like *ponn-ifla* or *kareel-ifla*, or in ancient weapons like the *lirpa* or *ahn-woon*, along with a collection of bruises, sprains, and even the occasional broken bone (all of which can be treated by the healers in residence if they become serious).

Of course, since even the most expert practitioner of the lirpa can do little against a capable foe with a ranged energy weapon like a phaser, much of this training has no practical application except for ceremonial exhibitions. However, the real value of the stringent VIDA regimen is the manner in which it disciplines the body in the same way that the practice of logic disciplines the mind.

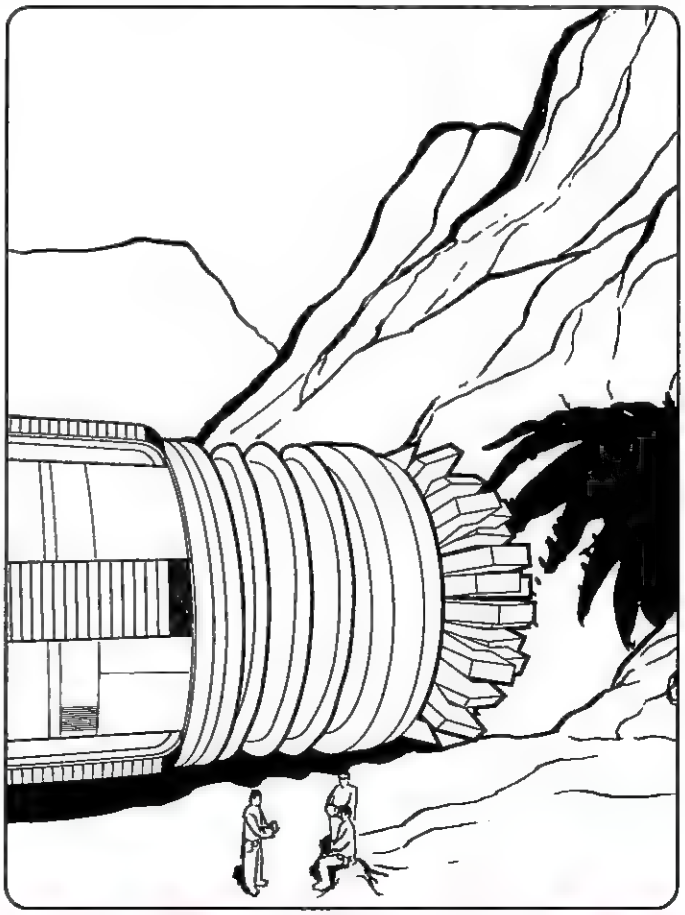
Although past students of the Institute include such prominent Federation personages as Captain Hikaru Sulu, the VIDA may soon play a much different role in Vulcan affairs. VIDA's weapons masters have a natural affinity for the ancient tales of the exiled sons of Vulcan who became the wellspring of the Romulan race. They have thrown in their lot with Ambassador Spock's attempts to negotiate some sort of reunification with the Romulans. To that end, the Institute complex presently houses two young Romulan warriors, Rual and Khazan, who have been brought to Vulcan in secret to learn more of the ancient ways. It is Ambassador Spock's hope eventually to sponsor these young men for admission into the Vulcan Science Academy at ShirKahr, if they can successfully stay out of trouble until then.

KHOMI

Bordering Shi'al on the south is the small province of Khomi. Except for the Llangon Mountains, Khomi primarily consists of flat and barren hardpan, cracked and canyoned by the strongest tectonic activity of any region on Na'nam. While the earthquakes make it difficult to live there, the large mineral deposits thrusting up through the mantle in this barren region do make it worthwhile to work there.

Currently Khomi has the largest active mining operations on Vulcan; massive drilling machines do most of the mining. Once the ores have been mined, they are transported up to various orbital facilities to be processed. The mining process is slow, and somewhat expensive, but by mining this way the risk of losing lives is greatly reduced. Vulcans dwelling in this region live in underground complexes built inside the mountains. Since the mountains are somewhat more geologically stable than the flatlands, these subterranean habitats are also substantially safer.

The Llangon Mountains, especially the area bordering on Shi'al, holds many monasteries such as the *Tinsha* Monastery of Hakihr (p. 17) and the *Pakro*



adepts. The mountains may conceal even more isolated monastic communities. Except for some very old records in ShirKahr, which speak of several groups that left ShirKahr and other Vulcan cities to live in Khomi, not much is currently known about them. The records state that not all the groups that left Vulcan's main cities did so because they opposed the teachings of Surak.

PLACES AND PERSONS OF NOTE IN KHOMI

KU'VEL'DI

Translating roughly as "Place of the Fallen," this large complex in the Llangon foothills is a research center set up by the government and Sarek's family to study ways of treating Bendii Syndrome, and of giving those elderly Vulcans suffering from it a chance to live, and eventually die, with dignity. The facility came into existence mainly because Sarek's third wife Perrin, after seeing Sarek lose his very selfhood with no assistance or even acknowledgement from his government, was determined that it would not happen to other Vulcans afflicted with the disease.

At first the government simply tried to ignore her, but that only made her more determined. When it became clear that a public debate was beginning to form about what many considered a private matter, the government relented, and agreed to help fund the research center. The center is not only trying to find a cure for Bendii Syndrome, but provides aides for those who have the disease, so that they can maintain mind control for as long as possible. A number of these aides are human volunteers, since Vulcans still largely prefer to avoid contact with Bendii sufferers.

KIR

Kir occupies the eastern equatorial area of Na'nam, directly east of Shi'al, and then extends southwest to the borders of Khomi. It contains a varied ecology with temperate lowlands along the coast of the Thanor Sea, arid grasslands beyond, and broken volcanic plains radiating out to the north and west of Mount Tarhana, Vulcan's best known active peak.

Indeed, Kir is in many ways wholly typical of average daily life on Vulcan. It holds within its boundaries the estates of several Great Houses and well-connected political personages, including those of the late Federation Ambassador Sarek. It contains a number of small villages and towns, and one fairly large city, also known as Kir (pop. 140,000), which was traditionally ruled by Clan K'vek, one of the leading merchant families in Vulcan's spacefaring history.

In short, an offworlder could observe Vulcan in microcosm by spending a few months here; but with few tourist attractions or religious pilgrimage sites to draw attention, only a small number of short-term visitors will ever see more of Kir than the view from the day-shuttle to the Tarhana Observation Tower.

PLACES AND PERSONS OF NOTE IN KIR

MONASTERY OF ULANN

An order of silent monks occupy this monastery, whose grounds occupy a hillside along the Thanor coast. The sect of *Ulann* emphasizes the power of deeds over words, and encourages its adherents to participate in performing useful works along with their studies. In ancient times, the monks operated a lighthouse that adjoined the property to aid seafarers in need.

Today, the lower floor of the monastery is set up as a printing plant and computer datanode, employed to disseminate both the teachings of Surak and those of the sect of *Ulann*. The Vulcan holiday of *Kal Rekk*, a day of atonement and silence, derives from the teachings of these monks. Many Vulcans will not speak on *Kal Rekk* for any reason.

MOUNT TARHANA

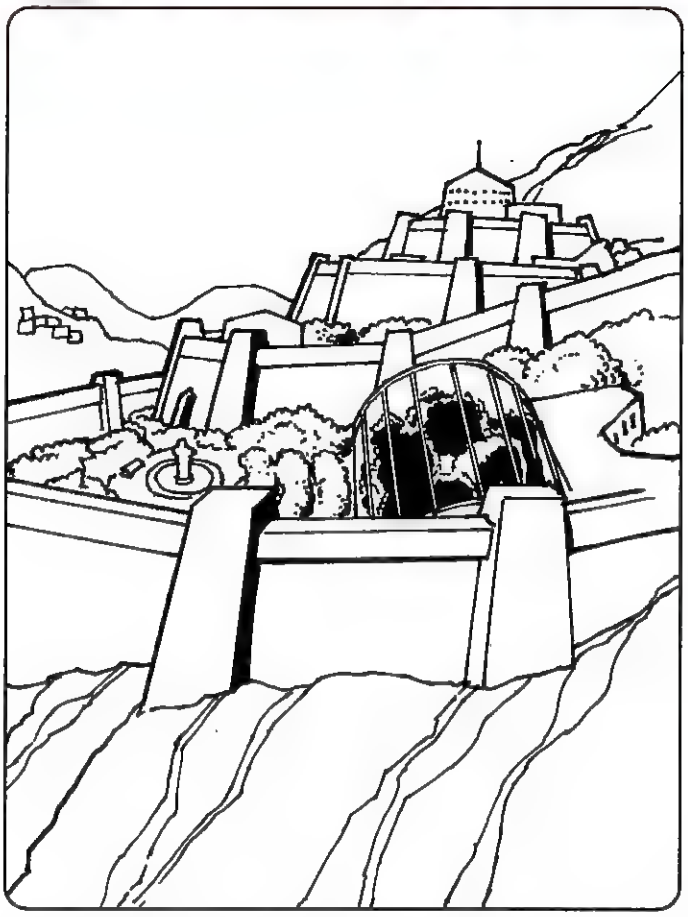
The Tarhana volcano lies almost 300 miles to the east of the capital city of ShirKahr, and is readily visible throughout the city. Although the volcano remains active, regularly belching out steam and fiery lava onto the plains below, thus far its eruptions have never threatened the safety of ShirKahr. Nonetheless, the sight of Tarhana in action seems to strike a common chord in all Vulcans, reminding them of how fragile their control over the planet's hostile environment can be—and by analogy, how fragile their control over their own emotional natures can be.

Tarhana's peak has been forever immortalized in art, poetry, and even cheap souvenirs wholesaled on a hundred different worlds (including the Old Quarter of ShirKahr) by Ferengi entrepreneurs. Unlike Mt. Fuji in Japan, however, Tarhana is recognized but not worshipped, storied but no longer mythologized.

SAREK'S ESTATE

The privacy of the personal residences of public officials, like all privacy, is sacred to Vulcans. As such, access to an estate like Sarek's is by invitation only, and invitations are not loosely given. However, if the Narrator plans to intertwine the episodes of his series with the signal events which have drawn the *Enterprise* into past contact with Vulcan (such as the long-term diplomatic relationship between Earth and Vulcan, or the Romulan-Vulcan Reunification), there is a chance that the Crew may someday have occasion to visit this place to consult with its inhabitants. Also, the houses of similarly influential diplomatic personnel (from old families) will be comparable. Like Sarek, such officials will have a country estate as well as a town house in ShirKahr.

Sarek's estate centers on a low, sprawling villa with thick, protective walls, set upon a mountain hillside with a panoramic view. The interior of the building is decorated in typical Vulcan fashion—austerely, with only the most essential furnishings. All items, from the chairs and desk to the muted wall



hangings, are carefully selected to give each room an overall sense of harmony. Yet the feature that gives the estate its most unique character is its outdoor gardens, tended lovingly for almost 150 years by Sarek's two human wives, Amanda and Perrin. The gardens include a small climate-controlled greenhouse where the only roses and tomatoes on Vulcan are grown. Well away from the house, in a shallow volcanic declivity (possibly a long-dormant crater), lies the family ceremonial site where Sarek underwent his three marriages, and where Spock annulled his first and celebrated his more successful second one.

Sarek's library contains several hundred volumes, and among them they manage to summarize much of the great teachings of both Vulcan and Earth. However, the estate's computer system, reprogrammed over the years by the genius of both Sarek and Spock, is a marvel which in the proper hands could be used to gain virtually unlimited access to any Vulcan, Earth, or Federation database, no matter how classified. Sarek's estate has its own scrambled subspace uplink, which is decidedly rare, even among Vulcan diplomatic families.

RAAL

The province of Raal occupies the western edge of Na'nam, and includes most of the navigable coastline along the Voroth Sea. Raal is one of Vulcan's most geologically stable regions, and as a result contains a number of its oldest settlements. Almost half of the province consists of temperate coastlands, which lie along the Voroth and the Na'ree River Valley, whose namesake watercourse is navigable by small boats for two to three months each year. As a result, although the city of Vulcana Regar is Raal's largest population center, there are at least a dozen smaller cities and towns in the province with populations ranging from 10,000 to 80,000 residents.

The Vulcana Regar spaceport is one of the three main points of entry for visitors to Vulcan. While those with diplomatic missions or spiritual quests to fulfill tend to beam down to ShirKahr, those who come to Vulcan for trade purposes use Vulcana Regar as their base of operations. Also a popular tourist destination, Raal offers guided expeditions through the spectacular wonders of the Fire Plains (except during solar flare season, when only the brave and foolish journey there at their own risk), and even pleasure cruises across the Voroth to Kwil'inor on solar-assisted sailing ships.

PLACES AND PERSONS OF NOTE IN RAAL

Fire Plains

Covering over 2 million hectares of land 400 miles to the northeast of Vulcana Regar, the Fire Plains lie at the base of a triangle of three active volcanoes—T'raan to the north, T'riall to the southeast, and T'regar to the southwest. The Plains would be of scientific interest for this reason alone, as barely a decade has passed without an eruption from at least one of the triple peaks. What makes the Fire Plains renowned throughout the galaxy, however, are the multicolored crystalline formations which grow throughout this superheated environment, providing an ever-changing explosion of kaleidoscopic panoramas—a feast for the eye or the soul.

V'Shar Headquarters

Finally, Vulcana Regar is also the headquarters of the *V'Shar*, the Vulcan bureau of internal security. For most of the past two centuries, the *V'Shar* had become little more than glorified spaceport police, checking manifests and apprehending offworlder pickpockets, and making ceremonial appearances at meetings of the Vulcan Council. Even its traditional technical information-gathering role had slipped to the Science Academy. As the activities of the VIM have increased in intensity over the past several years, however, the presence of the *V'Shar* grows steadily more visible and important.

Sutok

A heavy-set, olive-skinned man of almost 150 years, Director Sutok has been head of the *V'Shar* for almost forty years. He has a deep, sonorous voice and a regal bearing, and always prefers if possible to reflect upon a situation before choosing a course of action. A graduate of both the Science Academy (in molecular chemistry) and the Vulcan Institute of

Defensive Arts, Sutok has never been off-world. There are those who allege that Sutok holds a degree of sympathy for some of the political agendas of the VIM, and may have moved slowly to infiltrate their ranks as a result. Now that the VIM has stepped up its activities to include treasonous plots such as the recent attempt to locate and reassemble the Stone of Gol, Sutok has dedicated the *V'Shar* to rooting out its members and bringing them to justice.

T'shanik

A lithe young Vulcan woman with black hair and hazel eyes, T'shanik enrolled in the *V'Shar* upon returning to Vulcan to 2366, after just failing (as runner-up to Wesley Crusher) to qualify for admission to Starfleet Academy. Although a strict adherent to the ways of Surak, T'shanik seems to possess an unusually high degree of curiosity about the customs and ways of offworlders, and she has been employed on several occasions as a liaison when the *V'Shar* is called upon to interact with other non-Vulcan Federation personnel.

Vulcana Regar

The single largest city on Vulcan had a population of 860,000 as of the 2360 Census. The city contains offices for the factors of Vulcan's primary mercantile families, vast warehouses for the storage of all manner of cargoes, the central office of the Vulcan House of Merchants, and the Regar Currency Exchange. Given the legendary honesty of Vulcans, illegal activities such as smuggling or hijacking are virtually unheard of here, and anyone caught even shading the tariff laws in their favor is quickly invited to leave the planet. Despite this, the Ferengi consulate on Vulcan is located here. For those seeking to sell their cargoes for a fair price, however, few markets can match the breadth of Vulcana Regar.

Shi'al

Unlike Tat'sahr, the province of Shi'al is often called a province of contrasts. Being on the equator, it is known for several different types of climate. On its northern border with Tat'sahr, harsh deserts make up Shi'al's part of the Cheleb-khor. To the east, the terrain turns to rolling hills, which run down to the Thanor Sea. Here many different types of plants and animals seen in few other places on Vulcan live. Going south leads to the oasis at ShirKahr, where some of the oldest trees on the planet somehow survive.

Beyond the capital at ShirKahr lie the Shival Flats, a large open desert area that reminds visiting Terrans of the Bonneville Salt Flats on the North American continent. Unlike the flats of Earth, the Shival flats offer people a chance to watch the solar flare activity of Vulcan's star 40 Eridani A safely. The shows are considered spectacular, but can only be viewed during Vulcan's winter months, since during the summer the flares create deadly lightning storms in the ionosphere that scour the flats clean.

Shi'al, being one of most tectonically stable areas on Vulcan, has one of the largest populations of Vulcans on the planet. After the Awakening, the province turned from an area constantly wracked by war into the cultural center of all of Vulcan. But the scars of the past still remain in some ways, just as the lava flows from Mount Tarhana still steam just over the horizon from ShirKahr's suburbs.

Places and Persons of Note in Shi'al

Caves of Kulvir

Located on the southern side of the Cheleb-khor, these former vents of a now inactive volcano have become a place that day hikers or those who want to do some light exploring come to visit. There are several caverns that have unusual rock formations, as well as the remains of a former temple partially destroyed by lava. The tours always have a guide, and at least two people equipped with stunners, as the tunnels have sometimes been known to be used as dens by various desert creatures.

Da'kum'Ulcha

Its name translates to "City of Shadows" in Standard, and while individuals can visit the ruins, it's not a subject many Vulcans like to talk about. It's left as a reminder of what happens when life comes to mean nothing, and the horrible consequences that often result.

Da'kum'Ulcha used to be called Devlarm, and was a city that had a population of just over one million. According to legend, it was also where the first ship capable of space flight was built, and for that reason the city was destroyed. Being the first to reach space was seen by many of the warlords as the ultimate way to gain status and advantage over the others. When his rivals learned that Warlord Dvir's technicians were close to completing a ship, all the neighboring lords from as far away as Xial jockeyed for influence and power either by sabotage or negotiation. While the other houses attempted to negotiate with Dvir, the warlord Nu'val decided to stop the project at all costs. So without warning Nu'Val's sky force leveled Devlarm—archaeologists theorize that Nu'Val used an overwhelming strike of neutron warheads. Within a mater of seconds, nearly ninety percent of the population of Devlarm was vaporized along with the launch facility, although the city remained surprisingly intact. The historical records for the area break off abruptly at that point. Some of the people that have visited the city swear they have heard the sounds of the dying in the howling winds.

Followers of T'Shen

This small commune is devoted to teaching the ways of healing and preserving life, such as the Path of *Shan* (p. 88). Located about ten kilometers east of ShirKahr, it is one of the few monasteries that accepts outsiders—even non-Vulcans. Many visit the com-

mune for its combination of peacefulness and accessibility, and some even learn different healing techniques. The commune also teaches several methods of meditation and trance-inducing techniques.

The use of biofeedback to strengthen the mesiofrontal cortex is a common teaching here, although some orthodox followers of *Tu-Surak* say that using mental disciplines to interfere physically with emotion cheapens the effort involved and endangers the practitioner should he suffer trauma to that area. Small credit donations are requested in exchange for instruction and for staying at the commune. These are more symbolic than economic in modern times; the amount (in Vulcan rials) has famously remained unchanged since (according to legend) Surak himself carved the suggested donation into the obsidian wall of the reception area.

ShirKahr

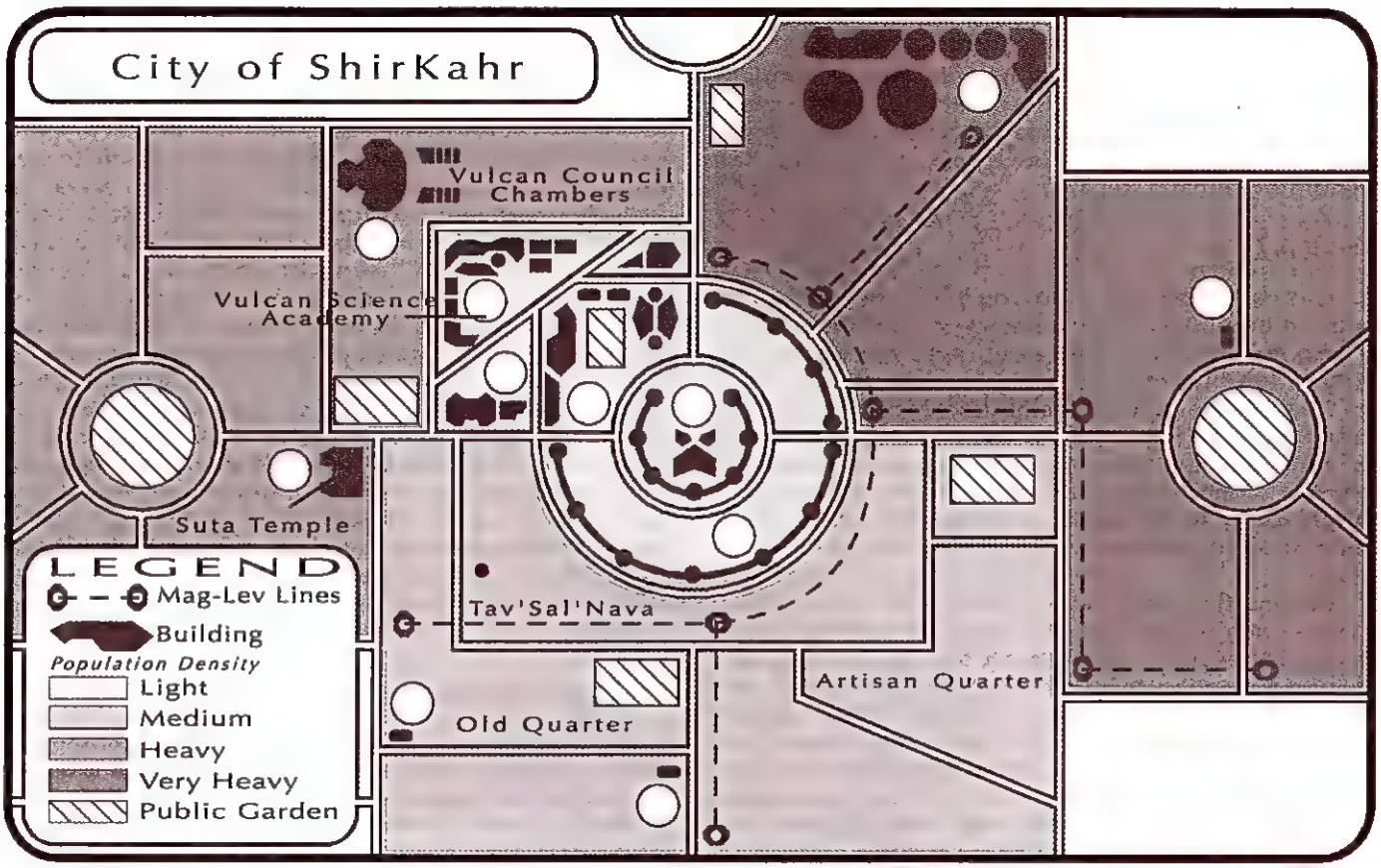
For centuries the oasis at ShirKahr was a strategic water source, fought over by various clans, warlords, and factions. At one time, it was the only inland spot on the Na'nam continent where trees grew, until all but the smallest copses were destroyed by the constant fighting. Historians who have studied the development of ShirKahr believe the city was sacked and rebuilt dozens of times during its history. Each invader made his own mark upon the city, changing some areas and making sure that anything related to the previous ruler was leveled.

But of all the conquerors of (and warlords from) ShirKahr, only under the teachings of Surak has the city truly prospered. Once the teachings of Surak took hold, and Vulcans devoted their energies to science and art, ShirKahr expanded from a strategic target to become one of the most powerful cities on Vulcan, and the planet's legislative capital.

Today ShirKahr is where the greatest artists and thinkers on Vulcan work and live, including many who have come from different parts of Vulcan and the Federation to see the new things that have been created. Of all of Vulcan's cities, ShirKahr receives the most offworld and Vulcan tourists. While many come to see the various works of art, or debate in the great lecture halls of the Science Academy, others also come to see the past, to remind themselves or show their children what life was like before Surak and the Awakening. ShirKahr's variegated past and its explosive growth after the Awakening has left the city divided into many quarters and neighborhoods, some still separated by walls built millennia ago, others with modern gravrails running through them.

Artisan Quarter

As might be expected, this is where some of the best artists on Vulcan can be found. Like the Old Quarter, it is a place where one should look carefully at what he wishes to obtain to separate the valuable crafts from cheap replicated Ferengi knockoffs. Among the actual artists, several renowned masters still make their home in the quarter. S'wek is a master



of sand sculpture. Examples of his work can been seen around the government offices, and in some of the public gardens. He only works on assignment, and currently is involved in several projects; he does have several small pieces in his workshop that he's willing to sell. He's considered a very fair Vulcan to deal with.

Another artist, T'rel, specializes in watercolors; she has studied on several worlds, including Earth. T'rel paints when she considers her talents to suit the topic, and currently has nothing in stock she would like to sell. She has allowed public exhibitions of the paintings she has kept in her studio, and of works in progress.

Old Quarter/Suta Temple

This is where most of the oldest architecture in ShirKahr can be found. Vulcans have gone to great lengths to keep the area as close to its ancient design as possible. The *Suta* temple gets special care; although few Vulcans worship there any more, it holds a special place in the history of ShirKahr. It was one of the first places that allowed Surak and his followers to teach their beliefs publicly, as they closely matched those of the temple priests. Priests of *Telalep*, they believed that by learning the truth of any situation one could accept it calmly.

For many years people have come to learn about Vulcan's history here, but even on a traditional planet such as Vulcan the sheer number of tourists and visitors has left the area an odd hodge-podge of history and modernity. Subspace links rest on ancient minarets, and merchants weigh out *kevas* trinkets on antique balances while recording transactions on top-quality PADD's. Good quality hotels and inns can still be found in the quarter, but you'll have to deal with tourist junkets and guided tours.

Vulcan residents tend to avoid the quarter when there are a lot of tourists around, as they constantly are asked to have their holo taken, which in general Vulcans consider rude. Still, the quality of one hotel in the quarter, the Tav'Sal'Nava or "Finest House," cannot be denied, as it's nearly the only hotel on the planet that any Ferengi trade delegate or envoy will tolerate. The most prestigious hotel in all of ShirKahr, its facilities are considered some of Vulcan's finest. All types of offworld cuisine are served, including meat, but Vulcans will have nothing to do with its preparation or storage. The hotel boasts a truly interspecies staff, with representatives of (and specialized rooms for) nearly every major species in the Federation, and a few beyond.

Outskirts Area

This area is where non-Vulcans who like traditional Vulcan food and culture go when they have grown tired of the old quarter. There are several small hotels, inns, and restaurants that still cater to the native Vulcan population, but more offworld customers have been coming into the area. Some consider the quality of the food and lodging not only less elevated but better than that in the Old Quarter.

The Oasis, a very good inn in the quarter, is run by a former Vulcan professor of interspecies studies named T'kin. She took over operating the restaurant as an experiment to see the practical application of the things she taught. That was ten years ago; she continues to work at the inn, but doesn't mention the experiment much any more.

The Oasis has gained a reputation as one of the better places for non-Vulcans to go in ShirKahr. T'kin goes out of her way to make sure that visitors get to see as much of her world as possible. She has helped make arrangements for individuals to go on tours or visits to different places on Vulcan. Vulcans themselves are also very comfortable with her, and she has many friends in the Academy. Since the Oasis is located on the edge of ShirKahr's cultivated area, T'kin tries to warn unwary guests of the dangers of wandering around Vulcan's deserts at night.

Public Gardens

All over Vulcan, gardens and small parks play an important part in helping individuals keep their emotional control by offering balanced places for introspection and peaceful thought. At first the expenditure of money and valuable water on such things was seen as an illogical waste of resources, but after much debate (in which the proponents pointed out that Surak valued peace almost as much as logic), the city fathers agreed to plant public gardens as an experiment.

Since then, public gardens and parks have become an integral part of every Vulcan city. No new construction is planned that doesn't include at least one park or at least a small contemplative area. Today small parks can be found throughout ShirKahr, each with its own unique fountain or sculpture. Private houses often have their own gardens as part of their construction.

The public gardens of ShirKahr are there for those who don't have a garden of their own, or need to have a quiet place to meditate while away from home. The gardens, located between the government council chambers, the Academy and the Old Quarter, are built to represent the different terrain types found on Vulcan.

Vulcan Council Chambers

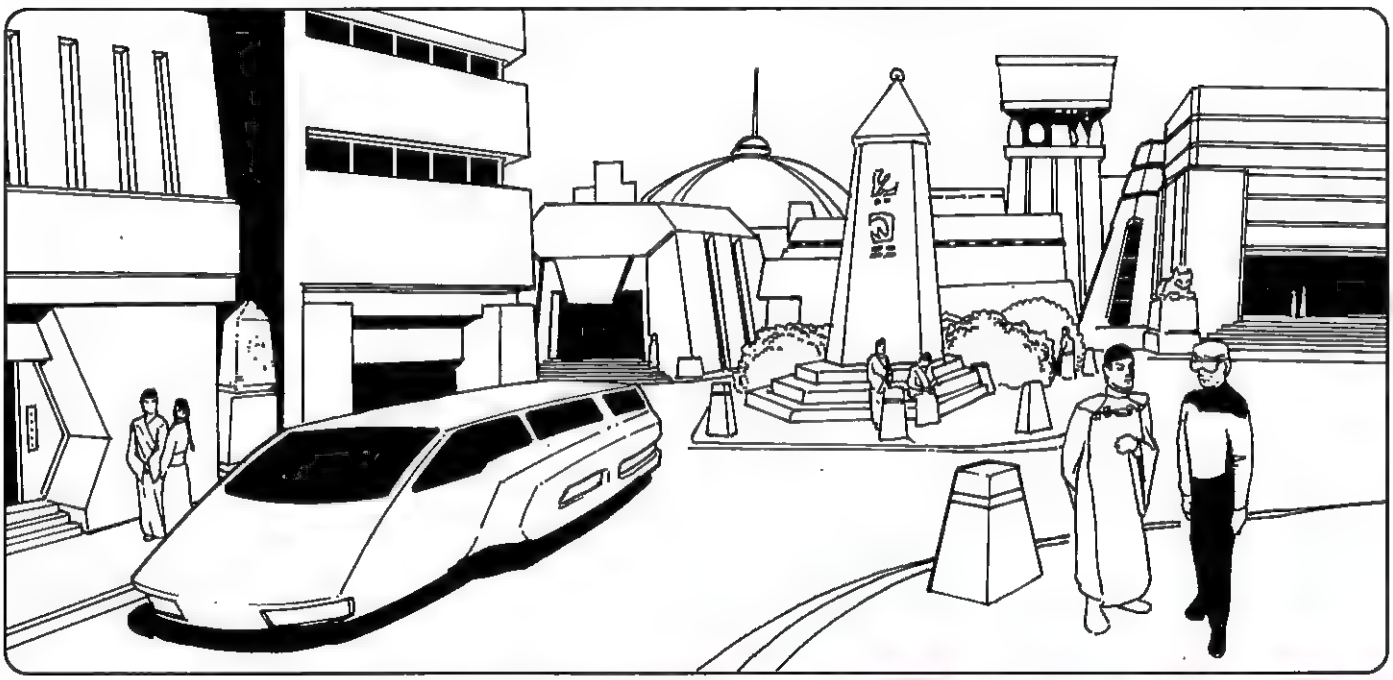
Just west of the university are the main buildings of Vulcan's planetary government. Most of these buildings are closed to the general public, unless you have specific business. One area that is open to the public is the Hall of Voices; the hall is a huge enclosed amphitheater several meters underground. Here, in traditional Vulcan fashion, open debates are held on various topics. In these types of debates each side presents its case to members of the audience, who in turn may ask questions as each speaker explains his position.

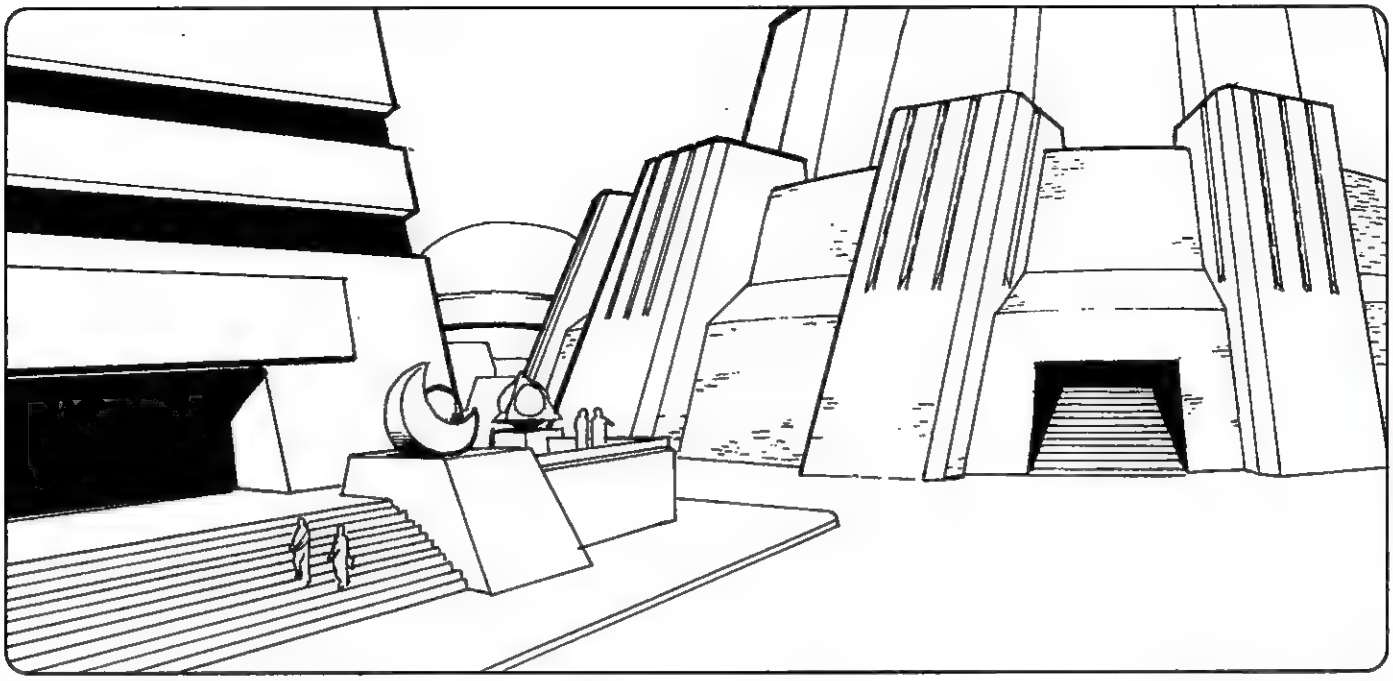
Near the government buildings are various embassies of species that have established diplomatic relations with Vulcan. Earth, as a member of the Federation, has established an embassy on Vulcan, The current Federation ambassador to Vulcan is retired Admiral Winston Neraneau, a veteran human diplomat known as somewhat of a ladies' man. Since he's single (and human) most Vulcans remain unoffended by his behavior. His astonishing knowledge of Vulcan philosophy (and almost native level of fluency in Ancient, Classic, and Modern Vulcan languages) also impresses the more traditional elements. Another person that can be found in the government area is Salkath, a former aide of Sarek's. Having spent a good deal of time with other species, he's willing to help where he can if people are having difficulty getting information.

Vulcan Science Academy

Before Surak, a huge fortress overlooked the oasis, built and rebuilt by each clan that captured it. When the Age of Awakening began two thousand years ago, Surak changed the fort's purpose from one of war to one of learning. With his adepts he continued the teaching of logic to those who wished to learn more about the concept. Vulcan education has always been very centered on the relationship between student and *pyllora*, a term which translates to "mentor" or "guide." Thus it was a relatively simple matter to transfer the center of ShirKahr's education from the old temples of learning to Surak's new agora. From there more and more came to learn, not only about *Tu-Surak*, but about other subjects as well. Surak encouraged this while he lived, wanting his fellow Vulcans to devote their full energies to understanding the universe and its infinite possibilities; it was here that the very concept of IDIC was born.

With IDIC as its mandate, the Vulcan Science Academy grew to study literally everything imaginable. Today it is considered one of the top research institutes in the Federation. Brilliant professors from other parts of the Federation come to the VSA to learn or teach in a variety of areas, including the hard sciences, engineering, computer sciences, philosophy, and medicine. Today the campus has expanded far outside the walls of the former fort that once housed it. Like other parts of ShirKahr, the campus now contains a mixture of old and new architecture.





Most of the old architecture can be found in and around the fort, which now houses the majority of the administrative offices and lecture halls of the Academy. Beyond this central core, clusters of labs, research buildings, and staff housing occupy ancient temples and newly built facilities alike, with each cluster devoted to a specific field of study.

Closest to the government quarter are two large clusters of modern buildings containing the medical center and computer research center, both open to the general public. The Academy Medical Center serves as the main hospital for the city, but performs medical research as well. Beyond these areas, one must request permission to visit any other area of the Academy, but it's not hard to gain approvals. One may also visit the Academy when a public lecture is being offered (which is quite often). Those who do get a chance to enter the administrative buildings in the old fort will see a beautiful garden laid out around the spring the fort once defended.

IDIC

An acronym standing for Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combination, the way of IDIC is the central thesis of the Vulcan Science Academy. Vulcan doctrines of the soul and the reality of the spiritual infuse the concept of IDIC as well; the Vulcan Science Academy has well respected schools of theology, philosophy, and arts. Everything that is or that can be conceived of is part of the Truth; diminishing one aspect of Truth to conform to bias or prejudice or for any other reason is illogical. The closest Earth equivalent to the doctrine of IDIC, emphasizing the permutations and combinations of reality to reveal the superreal, is kabbalah, although both Christian Scholasticism and Taoism share some IDIC-like features.

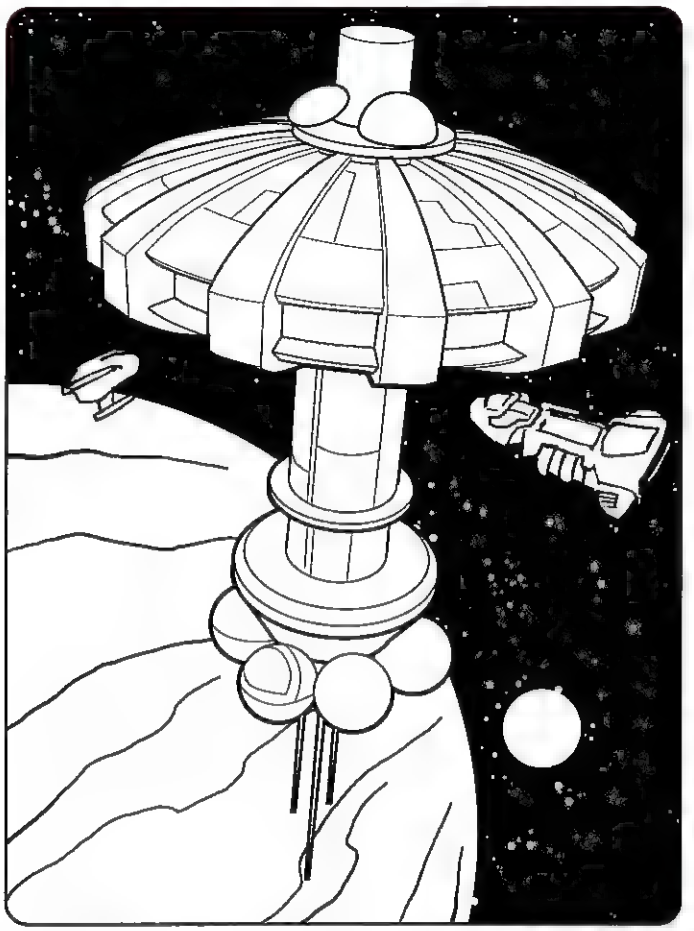
Vulcan Space Central

While not technically located within ShirKahr, the main facility of Vulcan Space Central lies in geosynchronous orbit above the city. The facility fulfills two purposes: First, it serves as the main entry point for most Vulcans and almost all non-Vulcans wishing to descend to the planet. All individuals wanting to go to Vulcan must pass through immigration in order to land on the planet, with the exception of Vulcan defense, Starfleet, and diplomatic personnel.

At immigration, each person inserts a data chip containing his personal and medical history; different types of data interface units exist for use by different races. Once the Central Clearing computers verify the data, visitors may use transporters preset for different locations on Vulcan. The most common reason for not being allowed to transport down immediately is that health-related information is not complete, or that an inoculation needs to be updated to deal with Vulcan's environment. The station has a top Starfleet sickbay and a campus of the Vulcan Science Academy's Space and Xenological Medical School.

The second function of the facility is to control the routes taken by different ships entering and leaving the system. Because of the near-constant flaring of Vulcan's sun, the space lanes must be continually monitored to make sure they are safe for ship traffic. Ships that have the shields and protection of a *Galaxy*-class cruiser need worry only about the largest and most intense flares. Smaller ships and freighters less well-protected must take more precautions.

The EMR emitted by heavy flare activity can play havoc with sensor and navigation equipment, making ships blind or unable to alter course. If ships with weak shielding pass too close to a flare, the EMR can be so intense that it can short out critical ship systems, leaving the vessel helpless in space. On very rare occasions flares will actually hit a ship, causing massive damage or destroying it outright. Because small ship captains are constantly trying to save time or fuel, it's not unheard of that some of the adventurous types try to take a short lane closed because of flare activity. Among the various small ship crews it's called



"riding the wave;" the administrators at Space Central call it "reckless and negligent endangerment" and punish it severely. Ships of the Vulcan Defense Fleet under the command of Space Central are often called upon to rescue stranded ships, or evacuate crews.

Computer Access Terminals (CAT's)

These are small access terminals that can be found throughout ShirKahr. They connect directly to the Central Clearing computers. From these terminals, one can get different kinds of general information about things like the address of a particular place, transportation schedules, or lecture schedules at the VSA. They can also be used to make restaurant reservations, or buy tickets for a performance. If one is looking for another individual, the terminals will give a simple one-page read-out that will include education, occupation, and a commcode. No personal information or addresses will be given.

TAT'SAHR

The northernmost province on the Na'nam continent, the climate in the northern area near the pole is a bit cooler (roughly 40 degrees) than the southernmost areas of the province near Xial. The terrain in central and southern Tat'shar consists mostly of hills and mountains. What flat areas there are have been used for some of the hydroponic farming that supports the Vulcan population. Several large farms take advantage of the slightly cooler temperature and the relative tectonic stability.

While the region is stable now, it was not always so. During ancient times the mountains contained several active volcanoes, which made the area highly prized by the warlords of that era. Because most of the metal deposits in Vulcan are locked deep within its mantle, the warlords came to see active volcanoes as important sources of metals. Despite the dangers, warlords often built entire communities near active volcanoes to mine and smelt the various ores brought up in the lava. Since many of the warlords considered having metals as important as having water, control of active volcanoes became one of the many resources fought over during the Age of Antiquity. Today, most of these volcanoes are dormant. Only the volcanoes in a place called the Womb of Fire, in the southern part of Tat'sahr, are still active. Indeed, minerals are still mined from the lava that comes to the surface.

Because of the near constant conflict between the warlords in Tat'sahr, many ruins can be found in the mountains from the "time of the beginning." While most of the ruins near the settled areas have been mostly picked through, many deeper in the mountains remain untouched. Vulcan scientists are interested in several of these sites, and tourists journey to the area-Vulcans for the climate, and offworlders for the seeming romance of Vulcan's warrior past.

PLACES AND PERSONS OF NOTE IN TAT'SAHR

Fort Aba'kur

Except for the oasis at ShirKahr, no other area on the Na'nam continent has seen so much war. For over five thousand years before the Awakening, Aba'kur defended the entrance to a small valley named Nal'shin. This valley was cool enough that small amounts of food could be grown there. The valley was also located close to two active volcanoes. Being able to produce food, metals, and even a small amount of water made Nal'shin a prime target for the competing forces of that time. Throughout the Age of Antiquity many battles were fought by the warlords for control of Nal'shin. Academy archeologists believe that many kinds of artifacts and information from different periods in pre-Awakening history may be found here.

Kul'Cha'Vir

This small, secret monastery appears in old manuscripts as one devoted to training those Vulcans who had the psionic ability of pyrokinesis. From this comes its name, which translates from old Vulcan as "Brothers of Fire." Scientists are not quite sure what might be found here, but most likely expect lost knowledge or training techniques. Regardless, both the Academy and the Vulcan government will politely request to see anything brought back from any expedition to the area. They will also want to control any information that might be found, considering the past activities of organizations like the VIM.

Computers, Communications, and Vulcan Society

While Vulcans have little problem exchanging hard data on various topics, trying to give or receive personal information is considered a severe breach of the Code of Privacy. This unwritten code usually applies to Vulcans only, as offworlders are not expected to understand it, but most Vulcans thus restrict their contacts with offworlders to the most formal level. The code has three basic parts:

Unless an individual is a very close friend or member of your family, he will never invite you to his home, and does not expect you to invite him to yours. The location of one's home is considered to be private information, and is shared only with permission.

When wishing to meet a Vulcan that you don't know, the request for the meeting should be done at the individual's place of work or study. If a meeting is agreed to, it should take place in a public area, like a restaurant, a garden, or perhaps a public lecture or performance.

If you find that an individual has requested a privacy seal on certain matters, you will not be able to access that information unless the person invoking the seal wishes to discuss it with you.

Vulcans who don't follow these rules run the risk of having themselves and their families insulted or, more often, simply ignored by polite society as disrespectful boors not sufficiently in control of their baser instincts.

Shrine of S'vec

One of the first adepts to be taught by Surak, S'vec came to Tat'sahr to try to bring peace to the province. For a time, he was successful, and the warlords stopped fighting. But the warlord Xi'rev saw the peace as a chance to obtain assets he had wanted for a long time, so he launched a surprise attack against his rival, Lhai. Lhai was not completely unprepared for the attack, but suffered heavy loses repelling Xi'rev's army.

Lhai, who also did not believe in Surak or his teachings, used the incident to discredit publicly both Surak and his movement. Not wanting to lose the progress that had been made in Tat'sahr, S'vec went to the court of Lhai to talk peace. Instead, Lhai accused S'vec of spying for his enemies, and publicly executed him. S'vec's acolytes decided to follow him into the center of Lhai's domain to preach logic and peace or die.

According to tradition, the acolytes died but converted the sons of both Lhai and Xi'rev by their example. Before leaving, S'vec's followers sealed up their former home and erected a shrine in S'vec's honor. Historians believe that the shrine was destroyed, but that the sealed commune might still be intact. If this is true, items from early in the Logical movement, possibly even including additional writings by Surak himself, could be found there.

Ta'vistar

This city is the cultural and economic center of the Tat'sahr province. While only about a quarter the size of ShirKahr, it's a much older city. Located in the center of the Viltan flats, some of its original construction dates back tens of millennia before the Awakening. Currently the city, which has the province's only shuttle port, serves as Tat'sahr's main trading center and has 250,000 people living in and around its ancient walls.

In different forms Ta'vistar has existed for nearly 25,000 years. Different areas of the city include:

Academy Quarter

This section of the city is being used by the Vulcan Science Academy. Originally the Academy wanted to use the area only to collect and study items found in the various ruins. At first the old buildings were strengthened or rebuilt, but as the Academy's needs expanded, it constructed new buildings. Today the quarter is a mix of modern and ancient architecture; it's also the part of the city that has the most public parks and gardens. Currently this is the area of the city where individuals go to get permission to explore ruins or conduct research. This is also where the main link to the Vulcan Planetary Network and the city's medical facilities are located.

Market Quarter

This is where most of the city's merchants can be found, as the main shuttle port is located here, and merchants were allowed to set up shop around the port. Unlike other parts of Ta'vistar, the market quarter has been completely redesigned with new construction. The port is quite busy, as most of the minerals and food produced in the province pass through it. Most of the manufactured and consumer goods that the province imports come through here as

well. The port doesn't handle warp-capable ships, but it can unload up to ten large cargo or passenger shuttles at one time. Individuals interested in equipment or supplies can find most things here, but the selection is smaller than in ShirKahr.

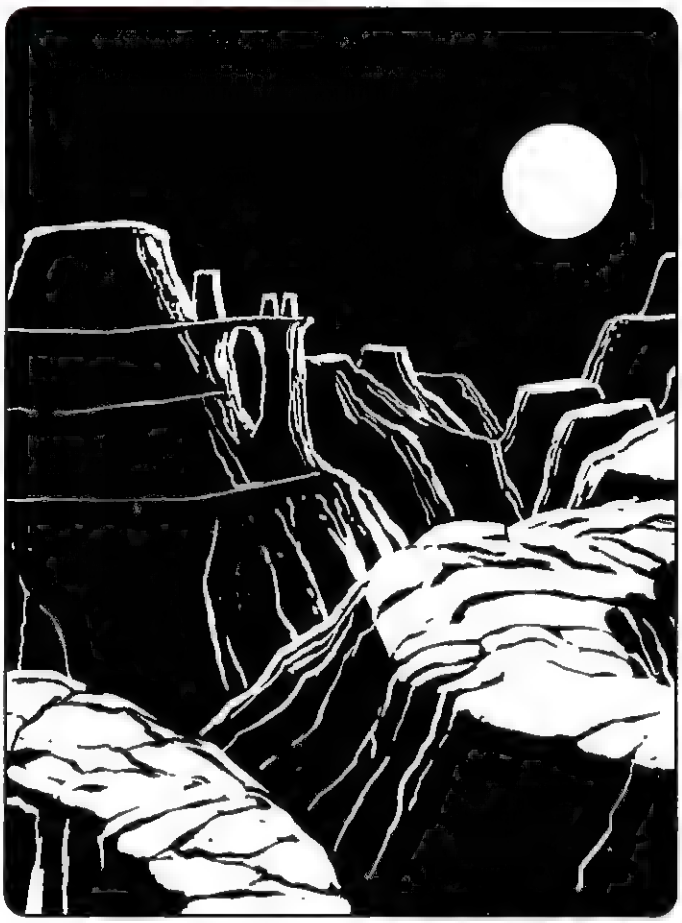
Old Quarter

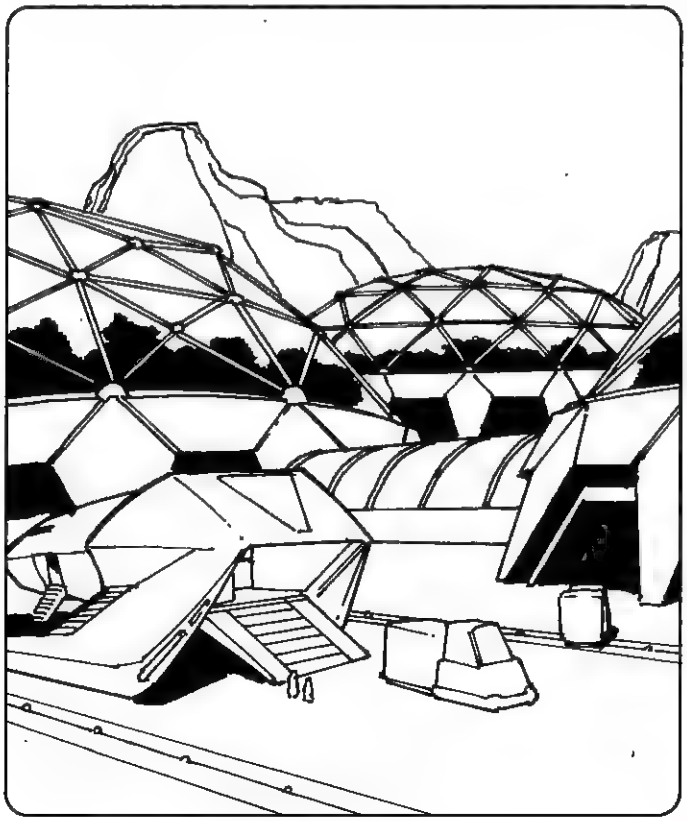
Lodging and entertainment establishments are spread through this area. This is the oldest part of the city, and some of its construction goes several meters underground. The streets are very narrow, so one can only get around the area on foot. Currently there are no major hotels in the quarter, but there are several quality inns that cater to both merchants and visiting professors. There are also several good restaurants, which serve only Vulcan food, to the occasional discomfiture of the rare offworld archaeologist.

Cheleb-khor

On the southern most edge of Tat'sahr, bordering on the province of Shi'al, is the harsh area of desert known as Cheleb-khor. Named for *Ket-cheleb*, the Vulcan god of anger, the region consists of several hundred miles of some of the harshest desert on Vulcan. While there is nothing of note about the region itself, except that it can be quite dangerous for unwary travelers, it is the place in which Vulcan children have traditionally tested their adulthood.

The ritual is known as *kahs-wan*, and it required young Vulcan males to cross the Cheleb-khor. The journey takes about ten days (from east to west), during which each child being tested can neither help nor even talk to any other child he sees. Those who pass the test are acknowledged as adults by their families in a ceremony that takes place at the family's sacred ground or at a major temple such as Mount Seleya.





Kahs-wan is a very old tradition, now observed only in the oldest and most traditionally conservative families. Vulcan's Cheleb-khor is not the only place on the planet for *kahs-wan*, of course, any more than Las Vegas and Paris are the only places on Earth for honeymooners. However, the tradition is strongest here, and a number of *kahs-wan* hostels along the borders of the Cheleb-khor maintain facilities for young men from all over Vulcan.

Xial

Xial is the only completely landlocked province in Na'nam, and consists primarily of equatorial desert. Despite this fact, and because of its strategic location between the great cities of Vulcana Regar and ShirKahr, extensive solar-powered hydroponic farming complexes dot the flat, rolling landscape. This, ironically, makes Xial famous as the "breadbasket of Vulcan." Under the Vulcan night, farmers load freshly harvested fruits, grains, and vegetables on hundreds of gravbarges for shipment to the two cities and beyond. The constant trail of flashing lights passing across the desert night sky is vividly etched in the memory of any Xial native, though not all remember it fondly.

Although the headquarters of the Vulcan Subministry of Agriculture is located in Chi-ree, a quiet town of about 80,000 (15,000 of whom work or study at the Subministry) in north-central Xial, there is generally little reason for offworld visitors to Vulcan to enter the province. Conversely, Xial plays a key role in the lives of native Vulcans who follow the traditional rituals, for Mount Seleya, the holiest site on Vulcan, lies in the southeast corner of the province.

PLACES AND PERSONS OF NOTE IN XIAL

MOUNT SELEYA

On a planet rife with hundreds of monasteries, temples, shrines, and ruins to the many sects and even gods which have held sway upon various regions of Vulcan, no place of worship is more important to the modern Vulcan way of life than Mount Seleya. The 7,000 meter peak is miles from any other settlement, surrounded to the north and west by a series of spindly crags, and to the south by a range of hills that eventually turns west and becomes the Mountains of Gol.

Mount Seleya's only contact with civilization is a small shuttleport landing strip several kilometers to the east. Pilgrims can approach the mountain's base only from this direction, across a sandy plain which narrows gradually as you progress, ending at a narrow bridge without railings over a yawning chasm seemingly torn from the earth by a giant hand—as legend holds it was in the famous Battle of Seleya, when the tyrant Sulen laid siege to capture the daughter of his rival, T'Vhet of ShirKahr. Everywhere you look, the mountain gives evidence of its fortress heritage, even though since the Time of Awakening it has been the chief temple of the disciplines of peace set down by Surak.

The temple complex at the summit of Mount Seleya stands at the top of a winding staircase containing well over a thousand steps. The thick stone walls and battlements offer further testament to its heritage of violence, though the balustrades now serve as balconies for the meditations of the adepts. The most powerful High Priestess of the Temple was T'Pau, an imperious matron who virtually ruled mid-23rd-century Vulcan through her coldly logical mind, prodigious intellect, and vast personal magnetism. She turned down election to the Federation Council, preferring to remain on Vulcan and on Mount Seleya. She was succeeded upon her death in 2279 by T'Lar of Gol, the former First Adept.

Although both monks and laymen use the Temple for study and meditation, many traditional ceremonies conducted at Mount Seleya occur at the base of the mountain within a sacred grove of spindly old-growth trees ringed by stone monoliths. The grove opens at one end into a natural amphitheater that has been hollowed out of the very face of the mountain, and ends at a raised dais with an altar of blood-red stone. At the appointed time of a ritual, a priestess (the High Priestess for important families) is carried down from the mountaintop on a litter, accompanied by a procession of acolytes carrying chimes or frameworks of miniature bells.

Ceremonies known to be conducted here include the *koon-ut-la*, the mind-melding of chosen bond mates at age seven that causes the adult awakening of *pon farr*; the coming of age ceremony for Vulcan teenaged males who have successfully passed through the rite of passage known as *kahs-wan*, and are confirmed as adult members of their Houses; and the *koon-ut-kal-if-fee*. All of these ceremonies are intensely private, and none are normally open to the public. Other families, especially old or influential ones, have their own sacred groves on their ancestral lands. For sufficiently important (or devout) families, the High Priestess of Seleya performs ceremonies on those lands as well.

T'LAR OF GOL

The current High Priestess of the Temple at Mount Seleya is a tall and slender silver-haired woman whose stately beauty has remained and perhaps even intensified as she has aged. Now in her 160's, she shows no signs of ill health, nor any intention of slowing down and naming a First Adept as her eventual successor.

Her original training was that of a Vulcan healer, and her skills with mind-melding techniques are unparalleled. She then spent years at the monastery of

Kolinahru, further harnessing her mental powers of insight, before being called to Mount Seleya by T'Pau to serve as First Adept. It was she who successfully completed the ancient historical ceremony of *fal-tor-pan*, restoring Spock's *katra* into the physical vessel created by the Genesis planet.

T'Lar regularly consults with the medical school of the Vulcan Science Academy on difficult cases of mental illness, and on the rehabilitation of those who have been institutionalized for violent thought-forms. Her current patients include Tallera, the VIM agent who successfully engineered the recovery of the Stone of Gol to bring about a return of the awesome powers of the mindlords.

Whereas T'Pau was recognized galaxywide as a voice to be reckoned with in Vulcan's interstellar affairs, T'Lar does not occupy nearly as high a public profile. Her influence behind the scenes is quite substantial, however, as she is spiritual advisor to the leaders of many Great Houses. In conversation, T'Lar speaks frankly and without hesitation about her objectives with no pretense of diplomacy, perhaps a byproduct of her years among the emotionless monks of *Kolinahr*; nonetheless, her decisions often seem tinged with a deep sense of compassion for others, both Vulcan and non-Vulcan.

Subministry of Agriculture

Normally, edifices of higher learning in backwater towns where agronomists, entomologists, and botanists earnestly debate methods of preventing insect infestations of grain do not make a Narrator's list of potential adventure locales. However, *V'Shar* intelligence reports seem to suggest that the Agriculture division of Vulcan's establishment may be a growing hotbed of VIM support, which could pose quite a threat to Vulcan given the inviting terrorist target that these vitally important food supplies could pose.

Episode Hook: The Seed of Subversion

The Ministry of Internal Security, the *V'Shar*, receives disturbing intelligence that Vulcan Isolationist Movement supporters within the Subministry of Agriculture in Xial province may be plotting some kind of terrorist action to sabotage or hold hostage the vitally important foodstuffs being produced in the Subministry's hydroponic farming complexes. The Crew may be called in (either by treaty commitments if they are Federation personnel, or by invoking religious or family bonds, as appropriate, if they are Vulcan) to aid in investigating these reports.

If offworlders are involved, T'shanik can be added to the party as Supporting Cast to provide them with a potential long-term Vulcan contact. Upon arriving on the scene, the players should have little trouble determining that something is amiss, but a somewhat harder time in learning what the planned act of terrorism is—the introduction of a microbe, non-toxic to the Vulcan digestive system, into a large shipment of grain bound for ShirKahr. This microbe, if released unchecked into the food supply, will within days bring most offworlders in the city into the Academy's Medical Center with a potentially fatal virus. Note that player characters with Academy or medical connections might conversely be brought into this adventure after the medical crisis has begun, and have to trace the problem back to its source to find its solution. The VIM terrorists have an antidote to the virus, but hope to withhold it until death and panic convince offworlders to leave Vulcan in droves.

Vulcan Technology

As one of the leading worlds in the Federation, Vulcan has access to the finest technology available in the Federation. Civilian devices equal in power to Starfleet tricorders and communicators are in common use and Vulcan medical technology is highly advanced. However, other technologies not available in the rest of the Federation are also used on Vulcan.

Vulcan Psionic Technology

The Vulcan people have been developing and refining various methods to amplify or extend their psionic abilities for many thousands of years. While special training in highly demanding mental disciplines can accomplish much, Vulcan mindlords discovered at least 5,000 years ago that certain devices, usually incorporating various psionically sensitive materials, were capable of greatly enhancing Vulcan psionic abilities.

Creating psionic devices is a difficult process. All such devices must be hand-made by trained Vulcan psionic adepts. Attempting to replicate or otherwise automate the construction of such devices results in physically identical, but wholly nonfunctional, copies. Psionic adepts must construct the devices by hand, imbuing them with psionic energies at every stage of their construction. Because of these limitations, the quality of the device depends upon the skill and psionic ability of the maker.

While most psionic devices are of fairly uniform quality, a few, made by exceptionally skilled adepts, are significantly more powerful than others of their type. Such devices usually become highly regarded relics treasured by their owners and passed down through the generations. Because of the difficulties of constructing psionic devices, it is usually impossible to duplicate the special properties of these exceptional devices.

In many cases, the techniques for constructing psionic devices are highly secret and shrouded in ritual and mystery. The techniques for creating a number of these devices were lost when the makers were for some reason unable to pass along their techniques. Many of the older psionic devices are impossible to duplicate. In addition, Vulcans no longer make some psionic devices for moral and ethical reasons.

Before the Time of Awakening some of these devices were used as deadly weapons of war, as well as for a variety of other dangerous and morally questionable purposes. Since Surak's reforms the construction and use of psionic devices has been much more restrained. The vast majority of Vulcans now believe that using their mental abilities in a harmful manner is a particularly heinous act. Many of the techniques for manufacturing the more dangerous psionic devices have been purposefully lost, and all known examples of these devices destroyed.

However, while relatively rare, a number of psionic devices are still manufactured in the present day. These devices are not for sale. Instead, someone who wishes to possess such a device must go to the adepts who make it and ask for one. In some cases, the

device will simply be given to the one who requests it if the reasons for asking are compelling enough. Usually, the person who wishes the device must also aid the adept in some fashion; occasionally, only individuals who are willing to learn the techniques necessary to construct the device are given one.

While some of these devices may be used by any telepath, Vulcan or not, and a few may be used by any sentient being, most can only by used by Vulcans or Vulcan-trained telepaths. Since Vulcans possess some of the most advanced psionic techniques in the Federation, many human, Andorian, and other telepaths who belong to races which do not normally possess psionic powers have received Vulcan training. Training in Vulcan telepathy requires many months, or even years, of diligent study. Vulcans adepts rarely give psionic devices to non-Vulcans without an exceptionally good reason.

MODERN PSIONIC DEVICES

All of the psionic devices listed here are being made today. However, all are quite rare, and convincing a Vulcan mystic to give you such a device or learning to manufacture one yourself is a significant achievement. Most Vulcans do not possess any psionic devices, and very few have more than one.

PLEK-RATH (VISIONARY MIRRORS)

The *plek-rath* is the rarest of the psionic devices still being manufactured. The secrets of making this device are known only to an isolated sect of monks living in the mountains near the Fire Plains of Raal. A *plek-rath* allows the user to see detailed images of any place he has visited and knows well, or of any person he has ever mind-melded with.

To perceive these images the user must meditate on the desired person or place and enter a light trance while holding and gazing into the *plek-rath*. After 10-15 minutes of such meditation (and a successful Receptive Telepathy test at Difficulty 8) images appear in the user's mind. A *plek-rath* can only be used to view people and places on the planet on which it is being used, as the device does not have the power to allow the user to observe people and places further away.

Plek-rath take up to six months to create and will only be given to individuals the monks deem truly worthy. Usually the monks require that anyone wishing such a device recite all of their important deeds as well as giving detailed reasons for needing such a device. Traditionally, the only acceptable reasons involve averting war, resolving a logical contradiction that only a *plek-rath* can unravel, or locating the bearer of a relative's *katra*. Often the monks will also require the user to perform some service for the monastery.

SIZE AND APPEARANCE: OVERALL A DISK 20-60 CM IN DIAMETER AND 1-2 CM THICK, A *PLEK-RATH* IS A CIRCULAR MIRROR, BETWEEN 15 AND 50 CM IN DIAMETER, SET IN AN ORNATE FRAME ADORNED WITH ELABORATE METALWORK.

MASS: 0.3-1 KG

USAGE: THIS DEVICE CAN ONLY BE USED BY VULCAN-TRAINED TELEPATHS. HOWEVER, IF A VULCAN MIND-MELDS WITH SOMEONE WHILE USING THE DEVICE, THE OTHER PERSON WILL ALSO SEE THE IMAGES PRODUCED, AND THE VULCAN CAN USE THE DEVICE TO PERCEIVE PEOPLE AND PLACES KNOWN ONLY TO THE OTHER PERSON.

RA-DE'KUTHA (MIND WARDS)

Before the Time of Awakening, *ra-de'kutha* were used to protect temples and other important buildings from attack. Since then the need for security measures has declined, but these devices occasionally remain in use. *Ra-de'kutha* are built and designed to be used either in pairs or in sets of four. One of these devices can be set on either side of a doorway or other opening. This opening can be as large as 15 meters in any dimension. Alternatively, four *ra-de'kutha* can be set around the inside or outside of a room or even around a campsite. *Ra-de'kutha* will not function if they are placed more than 15 meters apart. While these devices do not form a physical barrier, they affect any living being, sentient or not, which attempts to pass between them.

The device's creator determines the exact nature of the effect it produces. Some *ra-de'kutha* produce vertigo and extreme disorientation in those who attempt to cross them; others cause extreme pain or vivid sensory hallucinations. (A successful Mind Shield test, or Telepathic Resistance, will prevent this effect; the Narrator should set Difficulties at 8 for simple ra-de'kutha, but they can range up to 15 for the ones at the entrance to the Scroll Chambers of Mount Seleya.) In all cases, these devices affect everyone who crosses the barrier as long as they remain within 10 meters of any of the *ra-de'kutha*.

Even when someone affected by the device moves out of range, he still remains under the influence of the *ra-de'kutha* for an additional 1-6 minutes. These devices only affect beings which attempt to enter the warded area. Beings leaving this area will not experience any problems. Attempting to touch or move a *ra-de'kutha* also produces these effects as soon as the individual is within half a meter of the device.

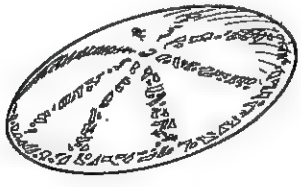
All *ra-de'kutha* are designed to admit certain individuals freely. Some require that people attempting to pass through them deactivate them by telepathically projecting a specific thought or image at the device. The *ra-de'kutha* must then be reactivated by sending another specific thought or image to it. Other *ra-de'kutha* are designed so that they can be activated or deactivated at the touch of a special amulet made at the same time as the mind wards. Individuals carrying such amulets can also safely touch or walk though the corresponding *ra-de'kutha* barrier without deactivating it. Vulcans who create *ra-de'kutha* generally create between five and ten such amulets with each set of these devices they make.

Today, *ra-de'kutha* can still be seen protecting certain Vulcan sacred sites and other important buildings. Only tricorders or other sensors which are specifically set to detect psionic energy can sense a *ra-de'kutha* in operation. A set of *ra-de'kutha* takes at least four months to make. Creating such a set is difficult and demanding work. Vulcan adepts who know the secret of their manufacture require that anyone who wishes a set provide a good reason why he needs such a device and to perform some significant service for the adept or for the adept's temple or monastery.

Size and Appearance: *Ra-de'kutha* are most often carved as stone pillars around 1.5 meters high and around 30 cm in diameter. These pillars are usually covered with complex engravings, and all of the members of a set of *ra-de'kutha* have identical patterns engraved on them.

Mass: Each pillar has a mass of approximately 50 kg.

Usage: *Ra-de'kutha* affect all living beings and may be used by anyone.



Shalis

Shalis are used as an integral part of the psionic Path of *Lis* (p. 86). Only individuals trained in this path may create or use a *shalis*. Most teachers of *Lispata* require that students carve their own *shalis* before teaching them the upper levels of *Lispata*. Learning to craft a shalis generally takes between two and four months and involves gaining the skill Artistic Expression (Craft Shalis). Narrators may require players to spend experience points as well as roleplay a character's instruction, if such instruction occurs during the course of a series.

On Vulcan, *shalis* are most commonly used by temple actors and other entertainers to perform feats of stage magic and to produce elaborate costumes and exotic appearances. In some communities *shalis* users play parts in certain ritual dramas which may only be performed by such individuals. In the far past several clans of highly trained Vulcan spies also used this device, but these clans have largely vanished in the modern day.

While quite powerful, *shalis* are also extremely limited. Used properly they will fool the senses of all living beings observing the user. However, their power is purely psionic in nature. Sensors, robots and automatic equipment are unaffected by a *shalis*. Also, a *shalis* will only affect subjects within a few hundred meters of the user. Anyone who is using sensors to observe the user from a range of more than several hundred meters will be unaffected by the operation of this device.

Size and Appearance: This device is a lentil-shaped disk of bone, horn or shell 10 cm in diameter and 3 cm thick, inscribed with complex patterns on which the user focuses.

Mass: 0.1 kg

Usage: This device may be used by any Vulcan or Vulcan-trained telepath with the appropriate skills in the Path of *Lis*.

Ska-plak (Memory Globes)

These devices were developed many thousands of years ago as a way for Vulcans to share knowledge and experiences telepathically without the deep intimacy produced by a Vulcan mind-meld. While most Vulcans will typically only mind-meld with individuals they are extremely close to, *ska-plak* can be comfortably shared between strangers. *Ska-plak*, which are carved from blue jasif crystals, are capable of storing thoughts, experiences, and memories for approximately one year. To store information in this device the user must hold the globe, concentrate upon the memories to be stored, and succeed at a successful Mind Meld at Difficulty 8. Most users can only record their actual memories on this device. The actual events experienced by the user, colored and influenced by the user's thoughts and emotions about the incident, will be recorded.

Vulcans and Vulcan-trained telepaths who have completed the demanding *Kolinahr* ritual gain sufficient control of their minds to imprint false memories and impressions onto a *ska-plak*. These memories appear to be completely real. Most *Kolinahr* adepts, however, consider such activity lying, and as such contemptible.

A single memory globe can hold memories of up to a single week. However, most users only record memories between several hours and several days long. Creating a memory globe requires several weeks, and recording memories into one requires several hours of uninterrupted concentration.

Receiving memories from this device requires only that the user touch the globe and clear his mind. The memories are recorded in the users mind around 100 times faster than they were experienced, so receiving memories of a full day takes approximately 15 minutes. Memories stored in this way can be replayed many times. Some Vulcan masters record their teachings on *ska-plak*, which they give to students as part of their lessons.

Most monasteries and temples which contain adepts who know the secrets of manufacturing *ska-plak* will readily lend out such devices to any honest and sincere individual who requests one. Such a loan allows the user to borrow the device for up to several months, after which time it must be returned undamaged and with its stored memories intact. Being skilled telepaths, the monks will immediately know if anyone asking to borrow such a device is unwilling to return it.

The monks will rarely actually give these globes to anyone. The only ways to acquire a *ska-plak* permanently involve studying for several years at one of the various monasteries and learning the secrets of creating them, or performing an important service for the adepts who make them.

Size and Appearance: This device is an elaborately engraved blue crystalline sphere approximately 8 cm in diameter.

Mass: 0.5 kg

Usage: Memories may be recorded in this device by any telepath. A skilled telepath can also help a nontelepathic individual record his memories on this device. Any sentient being may receive memories from this device merely by touching it and opening his mind. Recording memories in a ska-plak requires that the telepath learn specific techniques which require several hours of instruction by one who has already learned those techniques.

ANCIENT PSIONIC DEVICES

All of the devices listed here are no longer made. In most cases the secrets to creating such devices were lost centuries ago. Many of these devices are entirely unique, and most are extremely rare, with no more than two dozen examples of the device in existence.

Narrators should tread with caution when allowing players (or even supporting cast characters) to possess these devices. All are quite powerful.

Gran-rath (Teleportation Portal)

Less than two dozen of these legendary devices were ever created and most of them have been lost and destroyed. This device is a highly advanced version of the *plek-rath* (see above). Some archaeologists find Iconian influence in the art and carvings of the so-called "*Gran-rath* culture" of ancient Raal, which fell to unknown invaders around 20,000 years before Surak. A *gran-rath* may be used as a *plek-rath*, except that it possesses no range limitations.

According to Vulcan myth, users can observe well-known people and places from many light years away. In addition, if this device is used to view a target within the same star system it can reputedly teleport a single individual to or from the location of the target being observed. Because *gran-rath* utilize purely psionic principles, force fields of all known varieties, including starship deflector shields, may not inhibit their use.

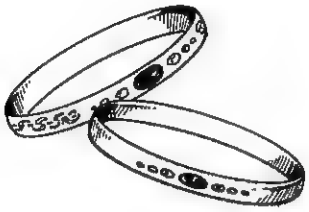
Today no working *gran-rath* are known to exist, though several ruined specimens have been found in Raal. Most Vulcan archeologists believe several *gran-rath* await discovery in ancient ruins on (and possibly off) Vulcan. Using a *gran-rath* is likely both strenuous and difficult.

According to the stories, it takes a minimum of three people to operate a *gran-rath*, and likely requires the ritual's leader to be trained in its use. To activate a *gran-rath*, the users enter a light trance, meld their minds, and focus on the location or subject they wish to observe. (If a working *Gran-rath* were to be used, this process would take around 15 minutes and require a successful Receptive Telepathy of Difficulty 7.) Once the participants perceive the desired person or place they must all meditate together, linking their minds for approximately one hour. At the end of this time, the users can transport one sentient being through the device (with a successful Projective Telepathy test of Difficulty 10). After the transport all three individuals who activated the device suffer exhaustion and must rest for at least an hour before attempting to perform any strenuous activity, including attempting to use the *gran-rath* again.

Size and Appearance: *Gran-rath* are large installations consisting of an inlaid or carved central metal disk 1-2 meters in diameter and 5 cm thick, flanked on either side by two elaborately carved stone pillars 2-2.5 meters tall and 20-25 cm in diameter. Approximately half of the recorded *gran-rath* were portable installations that could be moved and set up in any large open space. The others were immovable, permanent installations.

MASS: 200-700 KG

USAGE: THREE MIND-LINKED SENTIENT BEINGS, INCLUDING AT LEAST ONE VULCAN OR VULCAN-TRAINED TELEPATH, ARE NECESSARY TO OPERATE THIS DEVICE. THE DEVICE CAN BE USED TO TRANSPORT ANY SENTIENT BEING, INCLUDING NON-TELEPATHS, AND UP TO 50 KG OF EQUIPMENT. A SENTIENT BEING MUST ACCOMPANY ANY OTHER MATERIAL BEING TELEPORTED.



KLA'TOK (SLAVE COLLARS)

Kla'tok were used extensively before the Time of Awakening. Surak taught that slavery in any form was both illogical and an abomination. During the Time of Awakening all known examples of these devices were destroyed. Today only a few exist, either in collections of Vulcan antiquities or buried in ancient ruins. Acquiring a *kla'tok* would be extremely difficult (probably involving a perilous, and illegal, archaeological expedition), and almost no Vulcans would be willing to use one at all.

The master wears a small ring or bracelet containing a fragment of a *kosjen* crystal. The slave wears an adjustable metal collar set with a larger crystal of the same type. The individual wearing the master ring must be a telepath, but does not need to be a Vulcan. Anyone, telepathic or not, can wear the slave collar.

KOSJEN CRYSTALS

AMONG THE MANY RARE MINERALS FOUND ON THE PLANET VULCAN IS A FORM OF GALLIENITE CALLED THE *KOSJEN* CRYSTAL. *KOSJEN* RANGE FROM BLUE (THE MOST COMMON, AND THE WEAKEST) TO A FIERY RED, AND ARE ROUGHLY THE SIZE OF A THICK COIN. (LARGER SPECIMENS ARE KNOWN; THE HIGH ALTAR AT MOUNT SELEYA IS LEGENDARILY CARVED FROM A SINGLE *KOSJEN* CRYSTAL.) THE UNIQUE LATTICES OF THE *KOSJEN* FOCUS, AMPLIFY, STORE, AND DIRECT PSIONIC ENERGY. MANY VULCAN PSIONIC ARTIFACTS CONTAIN *KOSJEN* CRYSTALS, OR ARE MADE OF GALLIENITE SANDSTONE.

Any telepathic commands given by the master (accompanied by a successful Projective Telepathy at Difficulty 7 or Mind Control at Difficulty 4) must be obeyed by the slave. Commands to perform truly heinous acts or to commit suicide must also be obeyed unless the slave succeeds in a Mind Shield test (or a Presence Test, modified by Willpower, at the Difficulty of the master's Psi + Projective Telepathy) to resist such objectionable commands. The wearer of the master ring can also use the device to determine the slave's approximate location and distance with a Receptive Telepathy Test at Difficulty 5.

A *kla'tok* also allows the master to pick up the slave's physical and emotional state (Receptive Telepathy Test at Difficulty 5), but this last function is rarely used, since the information received is seldom pleasant. Use of *kla'tok* is a serious crime on Vulcan, and throughout the Federation. Any *kla'tok* discovered on Vulcan should be given immediately to the proper authorities. Private possession of this device is prohibited anywhere in the Federation.

SIZE AND APPEARANCE: *KLA'TOK* SLAVE COLLARS ARE ADJUSTABLE COLLARS OF BRONZE FITTED WITH A SINGLE *KOSJEN* CRYSTAL. THE MASTER'S BRACELET OR RING IS USUALLY MADE OF GOLD OR SOME OTHER EXPENSIVE METAL AND IS ALSO SET WITH A SINGLE *KOSJEN* CRYSTAL.

MASS: 0.05 KG FOR BOTH THE BRACELET AND THE COLLAR

USAGE: ANY TELEPATH MAY USE THE MASTER'S BRACELET OR RING. ANY LIVING BEING, SENTIENT OR NOT, MAY BE ENSLAVED BY THE SLAVE COLLAR.

RODS OF KEL

While the Stone of Gol was a unique or nearly unique weapon of vast power, the Rods of Kel were among the primary psionic weapons used in the many conflicts before the Time of Awakening. Powered by the will and life energy of the user, these devices were much more limited in range and effect, but were still quite formidable. In addition, many of these rods could also channel and focus the user's energy for other purposes, including healing.

To operate this device as a weapon the attacker simply needed to aim the end of the rod at the target and concentrate on attacking. The attack succeeds on a successful Projective Telepathy test (Difficulty equivalent to an identical phaser shot). Since this weapon does purely psionic damage it produces neural and cellular disruption in all living beings, but cannot affect nonliving matter in any way. Armor does not protect against damage caused by a Rod of Kel.

Many hundreds or possibly thousands of these weapons were made before the Time of Awakening, but most were destroyed in the wave of pacifism which followed. However, many scholars believe that the secret of manufacturing more such devices still exists in the records of a few ancient Vulcan temples, monasteries, and institutes of higher learning. Persuading record keepers to release any such information could be a difficult task indeed.

DAMAGE: THIS WEAPON CAN BE USED ON A VARIETY OF SETTINGS. ALL OF THESE SETTINGS DRAW HEAVILY UPON THE LIFE ENERGY OF THE USER. USERS SHOULD KEEP TRACK OF HOW MANY SHOTS THEY FIRE WITHIN AN HOUR. USERS WHO USE THE NUMBER OF SHOTS LISTED IN THE FATIGUE COLUMN IN AN HOUR (EXTRAPOLATE WHEN USING A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT SETTINGS) BECOME EXHAUSTED AND MUST REST FOR AT LEAST HALF AN HOUR BEFORE FIRE THE WEAPON AGAIN. USERS WHO EXCEED THE LISTED NUMBER OF SHOTS WILL IMMEDIATELY FALL UNCONSCIOUS FOR AT LEAST FIVE

minutes and will awaken exhausted. (A Fitness test using the Vitality edge may stave off fainting at the Narrator's discretion.)

Many of these weapons can also be used to heal the sick or injured. To use a Rod of Kel in this fashion, the patient must relax, and if possible enter a *Rha-tel* trance (see p. 87). Then the user must touch the rod to the patient and concentrate upon healing. After between ten and fifteen minutes the user will be exhausted and the patient will have recovered two Wound Levels. The user must rest for at least half an hour before using the Rod again. A single patient may be treated with this device only once for a single set of wounds.

Range: 10/15/20/30

Size and Appearance: This device is a 40-cm-long ivory-colored rod 2 cm in diameter. The rod is covered with ancient Vulcan script inlaid in a silvery metal.

Mass: 0.15 kg

Usage: Any telepath may use this device.

RODS OF KEL DAMAGE

Setting		Damage	Fatigue	Notes
1	Light Stun	(2+2D6)	30 shots	Stun a human for 5 minutes
2	Heavy Stun	(6+4D6)	20 shots	Stun a human for 1 hour and a Klingon for 15 minutes
3	Lt Damage	8+2D6	12 shots	Kill small animals, injure a humanoid
4	Md Damage	12+2D6	8 shots	Seriously injure a humanoid
5	Hvy Damage	14+4D6	5 shots	Kill a humanoid, seriously injure large animals

Stone of Gol

The Stone of Gol is one of the terrible psionic weapons which use caused the Vulcan people to abandon their warlike ways and embrace Surak's philosophy of peace and logic. This weapon was split into three parts after Surak's transformation of Vulcan. One piece was placed in a Vulcan museum, while the other two were lost.

Long thought to be legendary, it was reassembled in 2370 by violent extremists from the Vulcan Isolationist Movement. They located the remaining two pieces in early Debrune archeological sites. Before these terrorists could use this weapon, it was confiscated by Captain Jean-Luc Picard of the *U.S.S. Enterprise-D*, who turned it over to the Vulcan government. Today the device has once again been disassembled and debate continues as to whether it should be destroyed. While legend tells of only one Stone of Gol, some Vulcan archeologists and historians believe that several similar weapons were made and that others may still survive in ruins on or off Vulcan.

The Stone of Gol was unique among all of the psionic weapons developed on Vulcan in that it was instantly fatal and was not limited by range. To operate the device the user need only hold the weapon, aim it at a single living target, and mentally activate it with a single Projective Telepathy test at Difficulty 5. The Stone then amplifies the target's violent and destructive emotions to a lethal degree.

The only protection from the Stone's effects is to empty your mind completely of all negative emotions. Fortunately, with the spread of Surak's teachings many Vulcans now possess the ability to clear their minds if given a brief warning, and any Vulcan who has undergone the rigorous *Kolinahr* ritual has purged his mind of all emotions and is totally immune to the affects of this device.

While this weapon cannot affect targets currently outside the user's star system it has no other range limitations. As long as the user can perceive the target, whether by sight, sound, or simply as a real-time image on a view screen or a voice on a communicator, the user can kill the target.

Damage: Unless the target holds no violent thoughts in his mind he will be killed by the device within five seconds. Individuals who are currently thinking aggressive or hostile thoughts will be killed instantly. No known form of armor or force field can protect the target from this device.

Size and Appearance: The Stone of Gol is an irregular oval 18 cm long, 7 cm wide, and 2 cm thick. One side of the Stone is covered with Vulcan glyphs; on the other side is an image of Kal-ap-ton in his aspect as the Vulcan god of death and one of Ket-cheleb, the Vulcan god of war, with an image of Kir-alep, the Vulcan god of peace, between them.

Mass: 0.2 kg

Usage: This device can be used by any telepath.

Sword of Sajik

This ancient weapon is a relic of an era almost a thousand years prior to the Time of Awakening, when Vulcan was visited by a number of malevolent noncorporeal entities known in legend as the *R'kaal*. These beings possessed Vulcans and drained them of their life energy. The conventional weapons of the day were incapable of affecting these creatures. Vulcan telepathy was capable of detecting them and temporarily driving them off, but could not destroy them or prevent their return. To solve this problem a number of highly skilled Vulcan psionic adepts under the direction of Sajik of Gol worked for many months to construct weapons capable of defeating these deadly foes, and eventually created more than thirty such weapons. Using Sajik's weapons, and under his leadership, the *R'kaal* were all slain or driven from Vulcan.

These weapons can detect the presence of most noncorporeal entities, even if a being is currently possessing a living body. These weapons can then be

used like swords to attack such beings directly. Striking a noncorporeal being with one of these weapons produces an enormous psychic shock which usually kills most such entities with only one or two blows. However, noncorporeal creatures of vast power, including beings from the Q Continuum, are generally immune to the effects of this weapon. This weapon can also be used on corporeal beings. Attacking a corporeal being will harm any noncorporeal being which is currently possessing him as well as doing physical damage.

Today, the Sword of Sajik is on display in the Vulcan Institute of Defensive Arts, located in the city of Xen'tal. Several other weapons of this type reside in the collections of several ancient monasteries and temples. These weapons are all extremely durable; none of those that survive have deteriorated significantly. Scholars believe that while a number of these weapons were destroyed, several more are buried in ruins on Vulcan, and a few may have even been taken to Romulus when the ancestors of the Romulans left Vulcan.

DAMAGE: WHEN USED ON NONCORPOREAL ENTITIES, INCLUDING ENTITIES WHICH ARE POSSESSING LIVING BEINGS, THE SWORD DOES 12+3D6 POINTS OF DAMAGE. IF THIS WEAPON IS USED ON A LIVING, CORPOREAL SUBJECT THE PSYCHIC SHOCK PRODUCED BY THE DEVICE DOES 6+4D6 POINTS OF STUN DAMAGE.

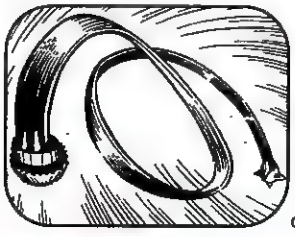
SIZE AND APPEARANCE: A SWORDLIKE WEAPON 85 CM LONG. INSTEAD OF A BLADE, THE SWORD HAS A ROUND, 1.5 CM DIAMETER, 70 CM LONG, CRIMSON ALLOY ROD. THE WEAPON'S HILT IS BRONZE AND CONTAINS A KOSJEN STONE WHICH GLOWS WHEN ANY NONCORPOREAL PSIONIC ENTITY IS WITHIN 3 METERS; THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE GLOW INDICATES RELATIVE DISTANCE, AND POINTING THE SWORD WILL GIVE A SENSE OF DIRECTION.

MASS: 0.7 KG

USAGE: THIS WEAPON MAY BE USED BY ANY VULCAN OR VULCAN-TRAINED TELEPATH; A SUCCESSFUL ATTACK REQUIRES A PROJECTIVE TELEPATHY TEST OF THE SAME DIFFICULTY AS THE PHYSICAL ATTACK. BOTH MUST SUCCEED. SOME DEGREE OF PRIMITIVE WEAPON (*TRILLPA*) IS NECESSARY TO USE THIS WEAPON EFFECTIVELY.

VULCAN MELEE WEAPONS

Advanced Vulcan martial arts techniques are taught at the Vulcan Institute of Defensive Arts and in various monasteries on Vulcan. While these martial arts are primarily practiced to aid physical and mental development and to enhance mind-body unity, they are also fully functional forms of combat. In addition to several styles of unarmed combat, there are a number of martial arts forms which use a variety of primitive weapons, including the *ahn-woon*, *lirpa*, *trillpa* (a Vulcan sword), and *khaiya* (a Vulcan long bow).

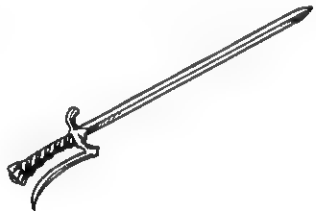


AHN-WOON

This weapon consists of a thin leather strip about six feet long. Sometimes it has a small leaden weight at one end. Generally it is used as a noose or in a whiplike manner; some practitioners also know how to bunch it up for use as a crude flexible club in close-in fighting. As a whip, it has Accuracy 8, cannot be used to block, and does 1+1d6 damage; it can only be used as a whip if there are at least five feet between the attacker and his target. Instead of doing damage, the user may wrap the end of the *ahn-woon* around the target's legs or arm; consider this similar to a grab, disarm, or throw (see page 126 of the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game* core rulebook for information on these maneuvers). As a noose, the weapon can strangle someone (1 point of Stun damage per round until the victim is unconscious, thereafter 1 point of normal damage per round until the victim dies) or grab a target. As a flexible club, it does 2+1d6 damage.

LIRPA

The *lirpa* is an unusual weapon. It consists of a stafflike shaft about 160 cm long with a crescent-shaped blade on one end and a weighted club on the other. Its uses and other statistics are described in the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game* core rulebook on page 238.



TRILLPA

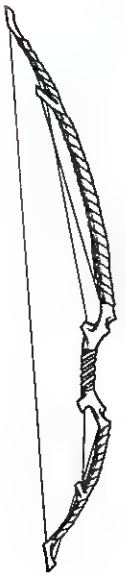
The *trillpa* is the standard Vulcan sword. Its design has remained almost unchanged for thousands of years. It consists of a long, straight, double-edged blade and a hilt with a single-edged crescent-shaped blade for a guard. This scythe-guard helps make the trillpa a superb parrying and blocking weapon. The finest modern *trillpa* are hand-made using highly advanced metallurgical techniques. Today most *trillpa* are made of a laminated composite of duranium and tritanium. A *trillpa* can be used as either a one- or a two-handed weapon and is extremely lightweight. Trillpa fighting involves many elegant, circular movements, using a mixture of slashes and thrusts which is both beautiful and deadly. It has an Accuracy of 8, Block +2, and does 4+2d6 damage. If a user performs a punch while holding the sword, the bladed guard adds +1 point of damage to the blow.

SIZE: 120 CM LONG WITH AN EXTREMELY THIN 2-CM-WIDE BLADE

MASS: 1.1 KG

BLOCK: +2 (+3 WHEN USED TWO-HANDED)

DAMAGE: 4+2D6 (5+2D6 WHEN USED TWO-HANDED)



Khaiya

The *khaiya* is a finely made Vulcan longbow. This weapon's asymmetrical staves recall the Japanese longbows developed on Terra. The *khaiya* is elaborately strung so that it possesses many of the characteristics of an advanced compound bow. Although the bow normally has a 40 kg pull, when fully drawn it requires only 15 kg of pull to hold it drawn. Designed for use by highly trained Vulcans in peak physical form, most humans have difficulty using this weapon (Strength Edge of +1 or better to use at all; Strength +2 to avoid a -2 penalty).

The art of *Khaiya-tal* has much in common with the discipline of Zen archery, where archers attempt to find a mystical unity between themselves, the bow, and the target. Masters of *Khaiya-tal* learn the art of hitting targets in total darkness, guided only by their keen hearing and a subtle telepathic awareness of the target. Using the bow in this manner can only be done by individuals with 3 or more levels in Primitive Weaponry (Khaiya). When used on nonvisible targets the archer receives a temporary -1 reduction in skill level.

Range: 10/20/40/100

Size: 150 cm long

Mass: 0.9 kg

Damage: 4+2d6

Vulcan Characters

Vulcans offer many intriguing challenges as player characters. While they might not seem that difficult to play at first blush—"All I've got to do is act emotionless and have a lot of Science skills, right?"—there's more to it than that.

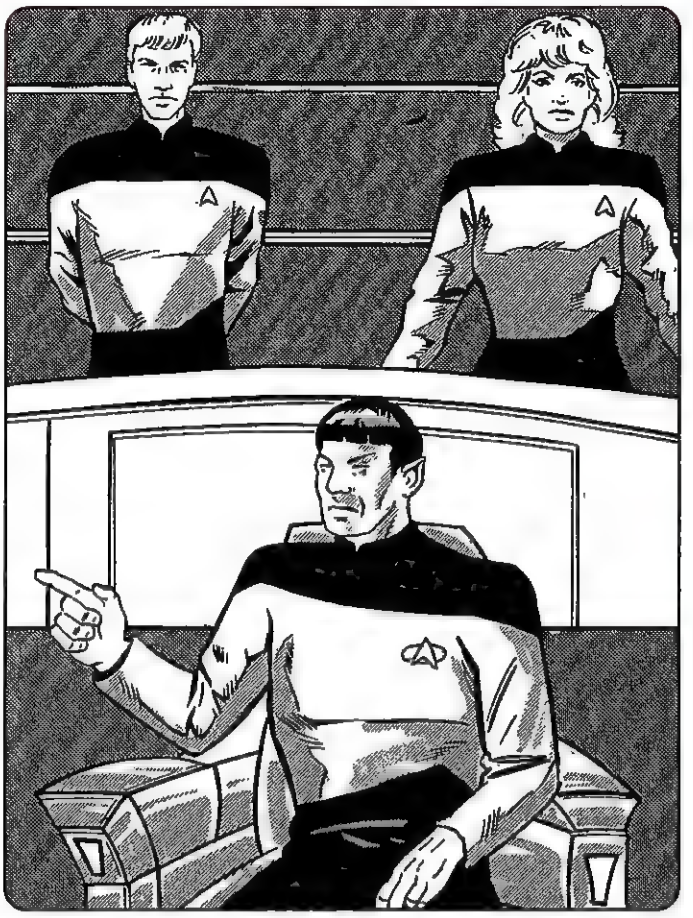
In the first place, being emotionless—or, more accurately, strongly suppressing your emotions—isn't just a matter of spending the whole game wearing a poker face and speaking in a monotonous tone of voice. Emotionless or not, Vulcans are still capable of indicating "moods" such as interest, curiosity, or frustration with a carefully chosen inflection, choice of words, or raised eyebrow. They'll never be overtly emotional (not when in their right minds, anyway), but every now and then a hint of emotion may creep to the fore. The trick to roleplaying this is to do it with a light and clever touch, thus taking the edge off the emotionlessness without descending into full-blown emotional behavior. That's a roleplaying challenge, and it can be a lot of fun.

Second, while Vulcans are usually intelligent and knowledgeable, they're not all science officers. They can be engineers, doctors, security officers, flight control officers, and any of dozens of other professions which are necessary for the proper functioning of a starship or a society. They can even be in command or leadership positions, balancing their desire to conduct operations according to complete, ruthless logic against their need to "relate" to their non-Vulcan subordinates. In short, don't fall into the trap of making every Vulcan character an emotionless lab rat—take the Vulcan concept and round it out in new and interesting ways.

Vulcan Characters in Starfleet

One of the most important things for a player to determine when designing a Vulcan character is when, if ever, the character joined Starfleet. Some Vulcans attend Starfleet Academy just as any other character and work their way up through the organization in the usual fashion. Such characters can usually be built using the Template, Overlays, and Background History in the core rulebook.

However, some Vulcan Starfleet officers may receive extensive training on Vulcan before attending Starfleet Academy (and thus perhaps only study at the Academy for a very brief time). It might even be possible for a highly trained Vulcan to join Starfleet directly without attending the Academy (see below). A Vulcan who has spent his entire life on Vulcan, perhaps training at the Vulcan Institute of Defensive Arts or serving in the Vulcan Defense Force, is going to have a different set of skills and abilities than the Vulcan character who goes through the standard Starfleet Academy training program. And, of course, Vulcan characters designed for an all-Vulcan campaign may not get anywhere near Starfleet Academy or ever go on a cadet cruise. Players should keep these differences in mind when designing their Vulcan characters.



LONGER-LIVED CHARACTERS AND PREVIOUS PROFESSIONS

Vulcans can expect, with reasonable care for their mental and physical health, to live long and prosper well past age 150, and most Vulcans live to over 200. Although Spock entered Starfleet Academy at age 19 as an act of youthful rebellion, many Vulcans pursue fulfilling careers on their home planet and then join Starfleet in their 50ish prime. Although Academy training is almost impossibly grueling for most humans over the age of 35, even a 100-year-old Vulcan used to mental discipline and physical training since birth may find the program refreshingly interesting. Once acclimated to the Starfleet way, a Vulcan officer may serve for decades; there are Vulcan admirals in Starfleet still commanding well into their late 180's. By age 150 or so, however, both physical decline and mental rigidity prevent even the average Vulcan from successfully changing his way of thought and regimen of action enough to join Starfleet at such an advanced age.

In game terms, this means that Vulcan characters could theoretically pursue one of the careers listed here and then join Starfleet, adding those Overlays and Background History elements to their character. It is hardly unheard-of, for example, for a Vulcan to attend the Vulcan Science Academy, work as a professor or researcher for twenty years, and then follow her work into Starfleet as a Science Officer. Such a character would begin with the Vulcan Template and Vulcan Scientist Overlay and add the Vulcan Early Life and Science Academy Background Histories, carrying her to age 48 (assuming she entered the VSA at age 20 and spent a twenty-year career as a scientist on Vulcan) and the prime of her life. Adding the Starfleet Academy and Cadet Cruise Background Histories would bring her to age 53, and after her first tour of duty she could logically claim the First Tour of Duty Background and the Science Officer Overlay by age 58, not even middle-aged for a Vulcan.

Obviously, this level of skill seriously unbalances a Crew composed of humans who don't have twenty years of past experience under their belts. The Narrator can handle this in any way he chooses, including simply disallowing such Vulcan characters entirely. The rules for the Overlays and Background Histories in the main text assume that the Narrator's first interest is in game balance, and assume that the relative skills of Vulcan-background characters and standard Starfleet characters should be roughly the same. Vulcan culture honors restraint and pacifism; a combat-monster Vulcan Warrior Security Officer with VIDA training and a shadowy past with the *V'Shar* may be fun to play but will almost certainly be impossible to play well, at least as a Vulcan. The Narrator can disallow any combination of backgrounds, skills, Overlays, or anything else that he wishes: He has primary responsibility for the game's success and his word is final.

If he decides the story can handle such skilled characters, letting only one player possess such an inordinately unbalanced point total is usually a bad idea. (A Narrator with a player mature enough to handle such responsibility, on the other hand, should go ahead and let it happen as long as his other players agree—the "Doc Savage" model is a fascinating one to roleplay.) The Narrator can, of course, simply decide that his Crew is composed of *U.S.S. Enterprise*-level "starring cast" heroes and give all the other players a number of points for skills, advantages, etc. equivalent to the level used to build the long-lived Vulcan player character. This is easily justified, and can be done in as much detail as the Narrator wishes. We recommend that any additional points have some degree of backstory to them, if not necessarily a formal Background History package; this makes more hooks for Narrators to hang episodes on, for one thing. The other characters can have had more tours of duty, have had civilian careers of their own before joining Starfleet (much as Dr. Katherine Pulaski had a successful civilian medical career before entering the service), be widely or well schooled in a non-Starfleet skill area (Picard, for example, could justifiably take a second, Scientist, Overlay reflecting his high proficiency at archaeology), or simply be much better than average at learning and using skills—which is to say, be proper Starfleet (and *Star Trek*) material.

OVERLAYS

There are many "professions" unique to Vulcans, much more common among Vulcans, or for which Vulcans are better known than in the "typical" Federation society. These are detailed in the new Overlays below. Before you use them to design a character, though, make sure the Narrator approves of the character concept. Characters such as ambassadors and priestesses aren't necessarily appropriate for every campaign.

These Overlays represent the level of skill added by twenty or so years at a given profession on Vulcan. Vulcans work slowly and methodically to succeed; rushing is emotional, and logically, a 200-year lifespan gives one the time to get things right. Starfleet teaches skills much faster and more intensely than civilian life, even (or especially) Vulcan civilian life.

AMBASSADOR

Vulcan diplomats and ambassadors are known throughout the Federation as skilled negotiators. Their calming logic and cool, rational approach to situations others consider intensely emotional often helps them resolve situations regarded by others as intractable, or which are expected to descend into violence.

This Overlay represents a typical Vulcan ambassador, though it can also be used for diplomats of lower rank as well. The Ambassador is a *troon-arr*, or graduate of the prestigious Vulcan School of Diplomacy, and is entitled to wear the distinctive red badge which identifies him as such.

Ambassadors and other diplomats tend to be peaceful people devoted to the rule of law and to the principle that all differences can be resolved without

violence. Many are total pacifists who refuse to cause any harm to any sentient being. However, this isn't a prerequisite for the job; the galaxy has certainly known diplomats, Vulcan and otherwise, who take a more "hardline" approach to negotiations. Many such Ambassadors have military backgrounds. Of course, no Vulcan Ambassador ever actually gets angry at those he is negotiating with, but there are plenty of ways to be extremely logical while still refusing to change one's position in a debate.

DIPLOMATIC RANK

Treat this advantage as the Promotion advantage (*Star Trek: The Next Generation Role Playing Game*, p. 104) for diplomatic characters.

Cost	Rank
0	Second Legate
1	Legate
2	Vice-Envoy
3	Envoy
4	Envoy General
5	Ambassador

VULCAN AMBASSADOR OVERLAY

Administration (Negotiating Teams) 2 (3)

Computer (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Culture (one non-Vulcan) 1 (2)

Diplomacy (choose Specialization) 2 (3)

History (Vulcan) 1 (2)

Language

- Federation Standard 2
- Vulcan 2
- One other 2

Law (Vulcan Law and one other Specialization, typically Interplanetary Relations) 1 (2) and (2)

Persuasion (Debate) 2 (3)

Social Science (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

World Knowledge (Vulcan and choose two more Specializations) 1 (2)

MASTER

A Vulcan Master is, as his title indicates, one who has mastered the psionic disciplines and powers for which Vulcans are known. Their mental powers are usually quite formidable, and they are often deeply logical and "enlightened" persons. Typically Masters remain on Vulcan and shepherd their brethren through the path they follow, such as the Kolinahr process and related trials and rituals. However, on

rare occasion Masters have left the planet to help the Federation or Vulcans abroad.

VULCAN MASTER OVERLAY

Artistic Expression (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Culture (Vulcan) 1 (2)

Dodge 1

History (Vulcan) 1 (2)

Language

- Federation Standard 1
- Vulcan 1

Law (Vulcan Law) 1 (2)

Planetside Survival (Desert) 2 (3)

Primitive Weaponry (choose one Specialization; must be a Vulcan weapon) 1 (2)

Psionic Skill, choose any three (except Projective Empathy or Receptive Empathy) 2, 2, and 2

OR choose any two (except Projective Empathy or Receptive Empathy) 3 and 3

Unarmed Combat (choose Specialization; must be a Vulcan fighting style) 2 (3)

PRIESTESS/PRIEST

The Vulcan culture has a long and rich religious (or, some would say, quasireligious) tradition. The leaders of this ancient tradition are Vulcan's priestesses (or, less commonly, priests). 2,000 years ago, Vulcan religion was powerfully altered by the ethical teachings of *Tu-Surak*, creating a priesthood seemingly less devoted to what outsiders consider a traditional religious faith or dogma than to the Vulcan ideals of logic and nonviolence.

Priestesses and priests tend to command a great deal of respect, and thus "power," in Vulcan society. Their advice and assistance is frequently sought, and their word (and interpretations of customs and rules) is often tantamount to law. They rarely leave Vulcan, but might do so to minister to a Vulcan colony, as chaplain on a majority-Vulcan starship (or even on a starship with a large Vulcan crew component), to identify religious or psionic artifacts uncovered at a Debrune archaeological site, or for some religious reason such as a quest.

Priests and monks are often bald, and some swear vows of silence. Priestesses and their acolytes usually wear long hair in an elaborate high style.

VULCAN PRIESTESS/PRIEST OVERLAY

Artistic Expression (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

Culture (Vulcan) 2 (3)

History (Vulcan) 2 (3)

Language (Vulcan) 2

Law (Vulcan Religious Law) 2 (3)

Mind Meld 2

Persuasion (choose any two Specializations) 2 (3) and (3)

Planetside Survival (Desert) 1 (2)

Psionic Skill, choose any two (except Projective Empathy or Receptive Empathy) 2 and 2

SCIENTIST

The Vulcan scientist may be a graduate of, or at least a former student at, the famed Vulcan Science Academy. As such he has received a thorough grounding in the world of the sciences, and is capable of performing advanced analyses and experiments regarding the most complex and arcane facets of at least one field of science (if not more). In all the Federation only the graduates of the Daystrom Institute are as highly regarded as VSA-trained scientists.

Vulcan scientists tend to pursue one of two career paths. Many of them, driven by love of learning and a desire to explore the boundaries of their chosen area of specialization, become researchers. They study the theoretical aspects of the sciences, occasionally delving into more practical applications for their work. Because of the Federation's prosperity, they usually have little trouble supporting themselves while engaging in their research.

Other Vulcans, including those most likely to become Crew members, prefer to put their knowledge to more practical use as explorers, archaeologists, field researchers, or members of Starfleet. These scientists prefer a more "hands-on" approach and want to test their learning in the field. They are often driven by a strong streak of curiosity and a desire to experience more than what just Vulcan has to offer.

VULCAN SCIENTIST OVERLAY

Computer (choose Specialization) 2 (3)

Engineering, Any (choose Specialization) 1 (2)

History (Vulcan) 1 (2)

Language

- Federation Standard 2
- Vulcan 1

Law (Vulcan Law) 1 (2)

Personal Equipment (Tricorder) 2 (3)

Persuasion (Debate) 1 (2)

Planetside Survival (Desert) 1 (2)

ONE OF THE TWO SETS BELOW:

SCIENCE, PHYSICAL (MATHEMATICS) 2 (3) AND

SCIENCE, ANY OTHER (CHOOSE TWO SPECIALIZATIONS) 2 (3) AND (3) AND

SCIENCE, ANY OTHER (CHOOSE SPECIALIZATION) 1 (2)

OR

SCIENCE, PHYSICAL (MATHEMATICS AND ONE OTHER SPECIALIZATION) 2 (3) AND (3) AND

SCIENCE, ANY OTHER (CHOOSE SPECIALIZATION) 2 (3) AND

SCIENCE, ANY OTHER (CHOOSE SPECIALIZATION) 1 (2)

V'SHAR AGENT

A character who chooses this Overlay works for Vulcan's intelligence agency, the *V'Shar*. He has been thoroughly trained in espionage operations, Vulcan defense and security procedures, and similar skills. Many *V'Shar* agents eventually go on to work in Starfleet Intelligence or as security officers on Starfleet ships.

Players should check with their Narrators before choosing this Overlay. An espionage agent, former or otherwise, is not always an appropriate Crew member.

V'SHAR AGENT OVERLAY

ATHLETICS (CHOOSE SPECIALIZATION) 1 (2)

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION (RESISTANCE) 1 (2)

COMPUTER (DATA ALTERATION) 1 (2)

DODGE 1

ENERGY WEAPON (PHASER) 2 (3)

ESPIONAGE (CHOOSE SPECIALIZATION) 2 (3)

LANGUAGE

FEDERATION STANDARD 1

VULCAN 1

LAW (VULCAN LAW) 1 (2)

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT (CHOOSE SPECIALIZATION) 1 (2)

PLANETSIDE SURVIVAL (DESERT) 1 (2)

SEARCH 1

STEALTH (CHOOSE SPECIALIZATION) 1 (2)

STRATEGIC OPERATIONS (CHOOSE SPECIALIZATION) 1 (2)

UNARMED COMBAT (CHOOSE SPECIALIZATION; MUST BE A VULCAN FIGHTING STYLE) 1 (2)

VEHICLE OPERATIONS (SHUTTLECRAFT) 1 (2)

V'KET WARRIOR

Although Vulcans today generally subscribe to principles of nonviolence, their civilization has a long history of brutal warfare. Their knowledge of the ways of war is preserved by the Vulcan Institute of Defensive Arts. VIDA teaches martial arts, the use of traditional Vulcan weapons, and even the body disciplines of the Path of *Rha* (see p. 87). Its graduates keep alive Vulcan's proud warrior tradition, while epitomizing that tradition's subservience to the paths of logic and peace laid down by Surak. (See p. 33 for more on the *V'Ket*.)

Despite their training, Vulcan warriors usually are not belligerent. They still follow the Vulcan code of logic and nonviolence. Many of them train in the martial disciplines as a way of exercising both their bodies and their minds. However, they are certainly capable of using their skills in actual combat conditions if circumstances require them to. They will not provoke fights—but they're well prepared to finish them.

As with the *V'Shar* Agent Overlay, players should consult with their Narrators before choosing the Warrior Overlay. While characters with military skills can be a lot of fun to play, the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game* is not primarily about combat or violent conflict. Therefore warrior characters may be inappropriate-or at least bored a lot of the time. On the other hand, if the Narrator is prepared for such a character he may fit into the campaign nicely.

VULCAN V'KET WARRIOR OVERLAY

Athletics (choose two Specializations) 1 (2) and (2)

Command (Combat Leadership) 1 (2)

Dodge 2

First Aid (Vulcan) 1 (2)

History (Vulcan) 1 (2)

Language

- Federation Standard 1
- Vulcan 1

Law (Vulcan Law) 1 (2)

Planetary Tactics (Small Unit) 1 (2)

Planetside Survival (Desert) 1 (2)

Primitive Weaponry (choose two Specializations; must be Vulcan weapons) 1 (2) and (2)

Rha-tel 2 (see p. 87)

Stealth (Stealthy Movement) 1 (2)

Unarmed Combat (choose two Specializations; must be Vulcan fighting styles) 2 (3) and (3)

EARLY LIFE HISTORY

Vulcans can certainly take any of the Early Life Packages if they so desire. Academic Upbringing and Religious/Ideological Training are both common in Vulcan society. Or, they may choose from among the following Packages:

VULCAN EARLY LIFE PACKAGES (*EACH COSTS 5 DEVELOPMENT POINTS*)

Vulcan Monastic Training: The character was raised in a monastery or religious school, has parents who are religious functionaries, or the like. Any Psionic Skill 1, +1 to Logic Edge, Multitasking +2, Pacifism -1.

Early Mind School: Early in his life, the character was recognized as having a high level of psionic talent and was sent to special schools to help him develop that talent. Typically the character will go on to choose Psionic Training. +1 Focus Edge OR +1 Range Edge, Psionically Gifted +4.

Vulcan characters should use the Attributes, Edges, Advantages, Disadvantages, and Skills lists from the *Star Trek: The Next Generation core rulebook*, page 71, for this stage of their Background History.

VDF SPACE SERVICE OFFICER

Vulcans serving in their planet's space fleet can be created using the standard Starfleet character creation rules from the *Star Trek: The Next Generation RPG* core rulebook, since the VDF's space force uses very similar organizational structures to those of Starfleet. Use the Vulcan Template and Starfleet Overlays from the core book, the Early Life and Advanced Education Background Histories from this book, and the Cadet Cruise and Tour of Duty Background Histories from the core book to complete the process.

Background History

Although Vulcans grow up with many of the same advantages as any other Federation citizen, they also have certain options unique to them. These options are reflected in changes and additions to the Background History (*Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game*, pages 70-76). Obviously, Vulcan characters may become special cases due to their long lifespans. Narratos should use or modify the information in the following sections as they see fit.

UNIVERSAL BACKGROUND

The Universal Background List is the same for Vulcans as for other characters, but players must take into account the notes later in this section regarding the Skills, Advantages, and Disadvantages which Vulcans cannot take or are not likely to take.

ADVANCED EDUCATION

A typical *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game* character goes on to Academy Life as the next stage in his Background History. Vulcan characters who do not attend Starfleet Academy may instead choose an Advanced Education Background Package or spend the equivalent points. (For characters who choose to do both, see p. 72.) Because of the more methodical pace of Vulcan life, and because of the longer Vulcan lifespan, most advanced education programs on Vulcan take eight years rather than the human standard four.

Such a character may thereafter go on to join Starfleet (i.e., to take one of the Starfleet Overlays from the core rulebook) and to follow the Tour of Duty section of the basic Background History (see page 73 of the core rulebook). He should not use the Academy Life stage of the Background History; instead, his Advanced Education is assumed to substitute for the usual course of study at the Academy. (Starfleet policy is to encourage Vulcans to enlist by waiving mandatory Academy training with equivalent training credentials—Starfleet is seldom disappointed in the caliber of Vulcan "transfer students.") However, he must be sure to learn the following skills at some stage during character creation: Athletics (any Specialization), Computer (any Specialization), Energy Weapon (Phaser), History (Federation), Law (Starfleet Regulations), and Vehicle Operation (Shuttlecraft).

VULCAN ADVANCED EDUCATION PACKAGES (*EACH COSTS 8 DEVELOPMENT POINTS*)

EXPLORATION TRAINING: VULCANS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN EXPLORERS. DRIVEN ON BY THEIR INSATIABLE CURIOSITY AND DESIRE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE UNIVERSE AROUND THEM, THEY TRAVERSE THE FARTHEST REACHES OF THE GALAXY. A CHARACTER WHO CHOOSES THIS FORM OF ADVANCED EDUCATION HAS STUDIED TO BECOME JUST SUCH AN EXPLORER. SHIPBOARD SYSTEMS (SENSORS) 1 (2), SPACE SCIENCE (TWO SPECIALIZATIONS) 1 (2) AND (2), CURIOUS +1.

KOLINAHR: THE CHARACTER HAS SOUGHT, AND ACHIEVED, *KOLINAHR*, THAT PLATEAU OF ULTIMATE LOGIC. THE CHARACTER MUST ALREADY HAVE LOGIC +2 TO TAKE THIS PACKAGE. CULTURE (VULCAN) 1 (2), KOLINAHR +4 (SEE PG. 83), +1 FOCUS.

NOVITIATE: THE CHARACTER IS IN TRAINING TO BECOME A PRIESTESS OR PRIEST. ANY ACADEMIC SKILL (CHOOSE SPECIALIZATION) 1 (2) (SEE P. 71 OF THE CORE RULEBOOK), CULTURE (VULCAN) 1 (2), ANY PSIONIC SKILL 1, OBLIGATION -1 (TO TEMPLE, RELIGIOUS ORDER, OR THE LIKE).

PSIONIC TRAINING: THE CHARACTER'S PSIONIC ABILITIES ARE DEVELOPED EVEN FURTHER IN PREPARATION FOR, AMONG OTHER THINGS, ENTERING RELIGIOUS LIFE OR BECOMING A MASTER. MIND MELD 1, ANY TWO PSIONIC SKILLS 1 AND 1, RIVAL -1 (SOMEONE WITH WHOM THE CHARACTER TRAINED AND HAS DEVELOPED A NOT-SO-FRIENDLY COMPETITION).

***V'SHAR* TRAINING:** THE CHARACTER UNDERGOES TRAINING TO BECOME AN ESPIONAGE AND SECURITY AGENT FOR THE *V'SHAR*. CONTACT +1 (CHOOSE), ESPIONAGE (CHOOSE TWO SPECIALIZATIONS) 1 (2) AND (2), SECURITY (SECURITY SYSTEMS) 1 (2).

VULCAN INSTITUTE OF DEFENSIVE ARTS: THE CHARACTER ATTENDS THE VULCAN INSTITUTE OF DEFENSIVE ARTS. PRIMITIVE WEAPONRY (CHOOSE SPECIALIZATION IN VULCAN WEAPON) 1 (2), WEAPON MASTER +2 (CHOOSE ANY VULCAN WEAPON), +1 FITNESS, +1 VITALITY EDGE.

VULCAN MEDICAL ACADEMY: VULCAN PRODUCES MANY FINE DOCTORS. YOU'RE GOING TO BE ONE OF THEM. FIRST AID (VULCAN AND ONE OTHER SPECIALIZATION) 1 (2) AND (2); MEDICAL SCIENCE (VULCAN MEDICINE AND TWO OTHER SPECIALIZATIONS) 1 (2), (2), AND (2); +1 PERCEPTION EDGE; CODE OF HONOR -2 (HIPPOCRATIC OATH).

VULCAN SCHOOL OF DIPLOMACY: THE CHARACTER ATTENDS THE VULCAN SCHOOL OF DIPLOMACY AND STUDIES THE WAYS AND MEANS OF INTERSPECIES RELATIONS. CULTURE (CHOOSE SPECIALIZATION) 1 (2), DIPLOMACY (CHOOSE SPECIALIZATION) 1 (2), LANGUAGE (CHOOSE) 1, OBLIGATION -1 (TO VULCAN, THE FEDERATION, OR WHOMEVER WILL EMPLOY THE CHARACTER'S SERVICES).

VULCAN SCIENCE ACADEMY: THE CHARACTER ATTENDS THE PRESTIGIOUS VULCAN SCIENCE ACADEMY. ANY SCIENCE SKILL (CHOOSE TWO SPECIALIZATIONS) 1 (2) AND (2), PHYSICAL SCIENCES (MATHEMATICS) 1 (2), +1 TO INTELLECT.

VULCAN CHARACTERS SHOULD USE THE ATTRIBUTES, EDGES, ADVANTAGES, DISADVANTAGES, AND SKILLS LISTS FROM THE "ACADEMY LIFE HISTORY" STAGE OF THE BACKGROUND HISTORY (*STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* CORE RULEBOOK, PAGE 72) FOR THIS STAGE OF THEIR VULCAN BACKGROUND HISTORY.

SKILLS

The Vulcan culture frequently emphasizes learning, intellect, and wisdom above all other qualities. Therefore it is not surprising that even among the highly trained officials and officers of the Federation and Starfleet, Vulcans are often regarded as learned and insightful. More than one Vulcan officer in Starfleet has surprised his commander by possessing knowledge of some obscure, yet relevant, subject or event.

In the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game*, these types of abilities are of course represented by Skills. Vulcan characters typically have a large number of Skills—often many more than the standard non-Vulcan character. Growing up on Vulcan provides a character with more opportunities to learn, and more willing teachers, than just about any other character background. A Vulcan who is motivated to do so can study just about anything he wants to, from obscure ancient languages and art forms to the most advanced modern-day technology and military tactics.

Vulcan characters therefore have many options when it comes to choosing Skills. Some of the Skills described in the core rulebook work in a slightly different manner for them, and there are new Skills which usually only Vulcans learn. A player who wants to play a Vulcan character should consider the available Skill options carefully. There are so many possible choices that it's usually necessary to have a very clear idea of a Vulcan character's background and abilities in mind before choosing Skills. Without a good "roadmap" for creating the character, it will be all too easy to overlook a Skill the character should have or to spend Development Points inefficiently.

SKILLS NOTES

Here are some notes and information on special Vulcan applications and Specializations for Skills listed in the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game* core rulebook. Players should also consult their Narrators for any campaign-specific changes or additions which may be in effect.

Default Skills for Vulcans

Almost all Vulcans should know the following skills, which are a part of each of the Vulcan Overlays described earlier in this chapter (with a few exceptions):

DEFAULT SKILLS FOR VULCANS

History (Vulcan) 1 (2)
Language
- Federation Standard 1
- Vulcan 1

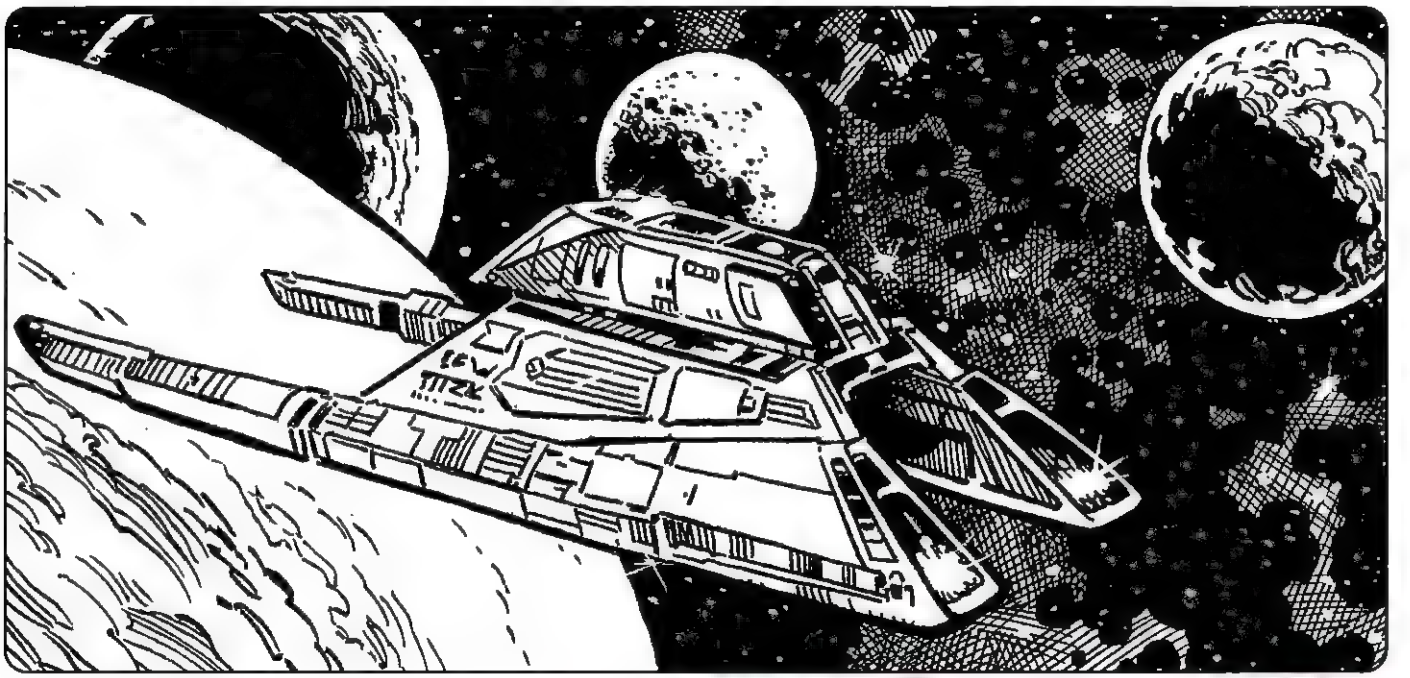
Law (Vulcan Law) 1 (2)

These Skills and Specializations represent the basic information and abilities which anyone growing up on Vulcan, or as a Vulcan, would probably learn. If for some reason a Vulcan character was not exposed to Vulcan culture as he grew up (for example, he was raised by humans on Earth), he will not have these Skills. Such a character probably should not use the Vulcan Overlays; instead, he should pick up the basic Skills common to the culture he was exposed to when he was growing up (typically those provided in the basic Templates described in the core rulebook). However, if the character has made a special effort to train himself in Vulcan culture using Vulcan study methods, he may know both sets of Skills.

Additionally, when choosing Specializations for Vulcans trained on Vulcan, players should look at things from the "Vulcan perspective." The typical *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game* character is a member of Starfleet, and the Specializations in the core rulebook tend to reflect that. For example, a Starfleet officer is likely to have been trained in Starfleet's own starship tactics (Starship Tactics (Federation)). That is sort of the "default" for Starfleet officers; studying other species' tactics (*i.e.*, choosing an additional Specialization, such as Romulan) first requires the character to have a firm grounding in Starfleet's own tactical doctrines.

However, a character who has received most of his training on Vulcan is likely to start out with, for example, Starship Tactics (Vulcan). Starfleet's tactics are an additional area of study he'd pick up after learning about Vulcan tactics. Different schools and cultures teach different things, after all—or at least teach the same material differently. In short, a character trained on Vulcan is probably going to have a very different set of Specializations than the "standard Starfleet character." Some of the Skills which are likely to be affected by this include Administration, Culture, First Aid, History, Law, Medical Sciences, Planetary Sciences, Planetary Tactics, Starship Tactics, Strategic Operations, and World Knowledge.

This differentiation does not, however, apply to technology-oriented Skills, such as Personal Equipment, Shipboard Systems, or Vehicle Operation. Vulcan was, after all, one of the founders of the Federation, and has always been one of its strongest and most supportive members. It has also provided a greater percentage of Federation scientists and inventors than just about any other species (except perhaps humans, who vastly outnumber Vulcans in population). Therefore it should come as no surprise that Federation and Vulcan technology are often virtually identical. Taking a Skill or Specialization specific to Vulcan technology (say, Vehicle Operations (Vulcan Shuttlecraft)) would be pointless, since anyone who can use Vulcan technology can use Federation technology in almost all instances (save for psionic technology, of course), and vice-versa.



Command Skills

Administration

The extremely logical Vulcans sometimes have difficulty adapting to less logical bureaucratic systems and procedures (such as those used by many human societies and institutions). The Narrator may increase the Difficulty for tasks performed using this Skill with organizations which are not as logical and well run as a Vulcan would be used to. On the other hand, given a short amount of time and the power to reorganize things, a Vulcan may be able to make such an organization function better than ever—assuming, of course, he has a staff of Vulcans.

Command

Vulcan logic and emotionlessness cause even more problems with Command than they do with Administration. Starfleet personnel are used to officers who relate to their subordinates well, who care about their feelings and problems (and express that concern), and who act in a "normal" manner. Vulcan officers are cut from a different cloth. While they do care about the personnel under their command, they do not express that concern in ways which humans and many other species consider "normal." Instead, Vulcans tend to concentrate on their duties and responsibilities, often in a way which seems "cold-blooded" or "machine-like" to humans, and expect their crew to do the same. They are also capable of making ruthlessly logical decisions which human commanders would agonize over (for example, sacrificing two crewmen to save hundreds of others). All of these factors sometimes make it difficult for Vulcans to command non-Vulcans; misunderstandings and bruised feelings (on the part of the non-Vulcans, of course) may easily result. The Narrator may increase the Difficulty of a Vulcan character's Command rolls in some situations to reflect this.

However, a Vulcan may take Non-Vulcans as a Specialization for Command. This Skill represents special training in relating to and commanding members of "emotional" species, such as humans, Andorians, Betazoids, or Tellarites. A Vulcan with this Specialization knows how other species are likely to react to the Vulcan command style and how to prevent tensions from arising. (At the Narrator's option, this Specialization is also available for other Skills, such as Administration.)

Diplomacy

The abilities of, and difficulties sometimes caused by, Vulcan diplomats are addressed in Chapter 2 of this book. The Narrator should keep that information in mind when assigning a Difficulty to Tests attempted by Vulcan characters using this Skill.

Espionage

For obvious reasons, Vulcans tend to perform some espionage tasks (such as undercover operations) poorly, but excel at others (intelligence analysis, cryptography, traffic analysis, and the like). Vulcan characters who take this Skill should remember this when choosing Specializations.

Operations Skills

Planetside Survival

Vulcans who take this Skill almost always choose the Specialization Desert or Mountain. Given the nature and climate of Vulcan, they usually have little or no opportunity to learn some Specializations, such as Arctic.

Unarmed Combat

Vulcans almost never teach their martial arts to non-Vulcans. Even when they do so, the instruction is limited to only the most basic maneuvers. Although the Vulcan nerve pinch is the best known of the Vulcan martial arts, it is but one of many. Vulcan's violent ancient past, combined with the more contemplative, Zen-like nature of later Vulcan warriors, have combined to create a martial arts tradition which is nearly as diverse as that of Earth. Some of the more common Vulcan martial arts include:

Kareel-ifla

Known to some wags in Starfleet as "Vulcan karate," *kareel-ifla* is almost the opposite of *ponn-ifla*. Created millennia ago during one of the most violent periods in Vulcan's early history, it stresses the quick, direct application of force to end a fight as rapidly as possible. In ancient times practitioners of *kareel-ifla* were often considered to be ruthless, savage brutes, and in many Vulcan eyes the style has an unsavory reputation even today. However, it's impossible to deny its effectiveness; Vulcans trained in *kareel-ifla* are able to face the likes of Klingons and Nausicaans in unarmed combat and leave them broken on the floor.

KAREEL-IFLA'S MANEUVERS INCLUDE:

Action	Difficulty	Damage	Notes
Block	-	-	Parries unarmed hand-to-hand attack. The character rolls an Unarmed Combat Test to establish a Difficulty for hitting him with such attacks.
K'sin	*8*	*3+1D6*	This sweeping crescent kick combines a blow with a takedown. In addition to taking damage, the victim is thrown to the ground and suffers penalties for being prone until he gets to his feet (which takes an action).
Punch	*7*	*4+1D6*	
Side Kick	*8*	*4+1D6*	
Tal-shaya	*13*	*Special*	Derived from (or possibly the basis for—the records are unclear) an ancient method of execution used on Vulcan, *tal-shaya* is the most feared *kareel-ifla* maneuver. In bluntest terms, it allows the practitioner to grasp the target's head and, with what seems to be a very slight effort, break his neck, killing him instantly and painlessly. Needless to say, *tal-shaya* is neither taught nor used lightly; only the most advanced and enlightened students learn the maneuver, and there are no recorded instances of it actually having been used in combat for several centuries. This maneuver is primarily intended for use on humanoid opponents; it cannot be used on some non-humanoids or on creatures who lack definable necks.

As far as is known to the masters of the martial arts schools (some of whom maintain millennia-spanning written records), no non-Vulcan has ever been taught the *tal-shaya* maneuver. Since *kareel-ifla* predates the Romulan exodus from Vulcan, however, it is possible that analogous maneuvers may exist in Romulan martial arts.

Ponn-ifla

Although it is one of the youngest Vulcan martial arts, having been created by the warrior-poet Ladok a mere seven hundred years ago, *ponn-ifla* is also one of the most popular on modern-day Vulcan. Even though it is quite effective in actual combat conditions, *ponn-ifla's* philosophy is one of nonviolence and peaceful reaction to aggression. The style concentrates on dodging, blocking, joint-locks, throws, and similar maneuvers instead of strikes.

A practitioner is expected to respond to force with a minimum of effort and movement, turning the attacker's blows back on him rather than initiating attacks of his own. A *ponn-ifla* master can take on a dozen attackers and incapacitate them all without moving more than a foot or two from his starting position. Indeed, the style's very name derives from an ancient Vulcan saying regarding the calmness in the eye of a storm; a practitioner is expected to be an eye of peacefulness amid a storm of violence.

Taroon-ifla (Vulcan Nerve Pinch)

This martial arts style is known by the vast majority of Vulcans. Most Vulcan children are trained in it from a very early age. It is perhaps the only single-maneuver martial art in the Federation. The entire style consists of a single attack—a "pinch," or form of pressure, applied to certain nerve clusters in the opponent's body. However, that one maneuver requires so much training and skill that it is as difficult to learn as many entire martial arts styles. First, a student has to learn where the vulnerable nerve clusters are in the target's body. This requires a focused familiarity with the anatomy of dozens of species. For most humanoid races the best location at which to apply the pinch is where the neck and shoulder join, but in some races the lower back, side, or side of the head (just to take a few examples) is the appropriate target. The Narrator may, if he deems it appropriate, increase the Difficulty for using the Vulcan nerve pinch to reflect a target's particularly strange physiognomy or a Vulcan's lack of knowledge of a target's nervous system; conversely, a character who has special knowledge of a target's race's anatomy might get a bonus to his roll (for example, a Vulcan character with a Life Science (Cardassian) skill trying to nerve pinch a Cardassian guard). Second, the student must learn how to apply the pressure to create the desired effect.

PONN-IFLA'S MANEUVERS INCLUDE:

ACTION	DIFFICULTY	DAMAGE	NOTES
BLOCK	-	-	PARRIES UNARMED HAND-TO-HAND ATTACK. THE CHARACTER ROLLS AN UNARMED COMBAT TEST TO ESTABLISH A DIFFICULTY FOR HITTING HIM WITH SUCH ATTACKS.
JOINT LOCK	7	-	IF SUCCESSFUL, THE CHARACTER HAS GRABBED ONE OF HIS OPPONENT'S LIMBS (USUALLY AN ARM) AND EFFECTIVELY IMMOBILIZED IT, PREVENTING THE ATTACKER FROM USING THAT LIMB UNTIL HE FREES IT. THE CHARACTERS MUST MAKE AN OPPOSED TEST USING FITNESS (MODIFIED BY STRENGTH) EACH ROUND TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE GRABBED CHARACTER CAN FREE HIS LIMB. THIS OPPOSED TEST IS AN IMMEDIATE ACTION, BUT MAY ONLY BE ATTEMPTED ONCE PER ROUND. THE ATTACKER IS FREE TO USE HIS OTHER LIMBS TO ATTACK, BUT ALL SUCH ATTACKS ARE AT -2 DUE TO AWKWARDNESS. A PRACTITIONER MAY, IF HE WISHES, USE BOTH OF HIS ARMS TO IMMOBILIZE OPPONENTS, BUT THIS WILL OF COURSE RESTRICT HIS OWN ABILITY TO MAKE OTHER ATTACKS.
NARILK	9	*SPECIAL*	THIS MANEUVER IMMOBILIZES ONE OF THE TARGET'S LIMBS JUST AS JOINT LOCK DOES. HOWEVER, THE PRACTITIONER ALSO TWISTS THE JOINT IN SUCH A WAY AS TO CAUSE HIS ATTACKER TO SUFFER AGONIZING, BUT NONDAMAGING, PAIN. THE ATTACKER TAKES 2+1D6 STUN DAMAGE EVERY ROUND IN WHICH HE IS CAUGHT IN THE *NARILK*; RULES FOR STUN DAMAGE ARE FOUND ON PAGE 133 OF THE CORE RULEBOOK. IF THE PRACTITIONER WISHES, HE MAY INSTEAD MAKE AN OPPOSED TEST AGAINST HIS ATTACKER USING FITNESS (MODIFIED BY STRENGTH AND THE PRACTITIONER'S SIGNIFICANT ADVANTAGE) TO BREAK THE GRABBED JOINT, WHICH CAUSE THE CHARACTER TO BECOME INCAPACITATED AND THE LIMB TO BE USELESS UNTIL HEALED.
REDIRECT	*SPECIAL*	*SPECIAL*	THIS MANEUVER CAN ONLY BE USED IF THE PRACTITIONER DELAYS HIS ACTION. HE MUST DELAY UNTIL AFTER AN ATTACKER HAS MADE A SUCCESSFUL UNARMED COMBAT TEST TO HIT HIM WITH AN ATTACK SUCH AS A PUNCH OR KICK. THE PRACTITIONER MAY THEN MAKE AN UNARMED COMBAT TEST OF HIS OWN, USING THE RESULT OF HIS ATTACKER'S TEST AS THE DIFFICULTY. IF HE SUCCEEDS, HE TAKES NO DAMAGE FROM THE ATTACK AND REDIRECTS IT SO THAT IT HITS THE PERSON WHO LAUNCHED IT OR ANY OTHER PERSON IN HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT RANGE WITH BOTH CHARACTERS.
THROW	8	1+1D6	TARGET IS THROWN TO THE GROUND AND SUFFERS PENALTIES FOR BEING PRONE UNTIL HE GETS TO HIS FEET (WHICH TAKES AN ACTION).

A PRACTITIONER OF *PONN-IFLA* MUST ALSO KNOW THE DODGE SKILL AT LEVEL 2 OR HIGHER.

Anyone with hands can grab someone's neck and squeeze, but he won't accomplish anything. It requires precise knowledge of where the nerve clusters are located and how to apply the pressure to use the Vulcan nerve pinch. The rules for the Vulcan nerve pinch are on page 126 of the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game* core rulebook.

OTHER SKILLS

ANIMAL HANDLING (SEHLAT)

The modern domesticated *sehlat* is more intelligent than the Earth border collie, and may be as mentally capable as even the lower Earth primates. Many *sehlat* even seem to have psionic bonds with their masters, especially the ones traditionally given to young Vulcans at age five or so as combination pet, companion, guardian, and "teddy bear." A *sehlat* can be trained to hunt or guard, among other useful things. Some Vulcan tribes in the ancient past trained racing *sehlat* and even used them to pull chariots.

ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

As discussed elsewhere in this book, Vulcan art is intended to stimulate thought about a particular subject instead of aesthetic appreciation or emotion. As a result, Vulcan art and music often seem somewhat "flat" or unappealing to many races. The disciplines involved are also distinctly Vulcan; few, if any, non-Vulcans are able to learn the Vulcan Specializations for this Skill. Vulcans, on the other hand, tend to be quite appreciative of other races' art forms, and can learn them, though they are of course unable to provide the emotional content upon which so much non-Vulcan art depends. As a result, while Vulcans are often able to master the technical skills involved in, for example, playing an Earth violin or creating an Andorian sculpture, it is unlikely they will ever be able to create masterpieces which appeal to the members of those races. Vulcan artistic creations simply aren't intended or able to evoke emotions the way these races expect them to.

CHARM

Vulcans almost never learn this Skill. Its social aspects are completely beyond them; Vulcans persuade by logic, not personal charisma, humor, or

attractiveness. The Narrator should consider increasing the Difficulty of any Charm Test made by a Vulcan character to reflect this.

Gaming

Vulcans' logical minds, emotionless expressions, and ability to calculate odds often make them good at certain games, such as poker or chess. The Narrator should consider giving them a small bonus (say, +1) to Gaming rolls in appropriate situations. Vulcan characters may well specialize in traditional Vulcan games such as *kal-toh*.

Primitive Weaponry

Although many people would discount them in this day of phasers and disruptors, old-fashioned hand-held weapons still have their uses, and Vulcan has a rich history of famous *trillpa* duels and the like. Even today many Vulcans study the ancient weapon fighting styles, though they approach them as much as sports as actual forms of self-defense. Still, any graduate of the Vulcan Institute of Defensive Arts is able to use melee weapons with enough speed and skill to fight quite capably. (See p. 69 for examples of common Vulcan melee weapons.)

Advantages and Disadvantages

For the most part, the Advantages and Disadvantages listed in the *Star Trek: The Next Generation Roleplaying Game* core rulebook are sufficient for most Vulcan characters. However, the following pages provide a few notes on existing Advantages and Disadvantages, as well as introduce several new ones.

ADVANTAGES

Existing Advantages

Curious

Curiosity, especially scientific curiosity, is a hallmark of many Vulcans. There are many recorded instances of Vulcans risking their lives to investigate some mystery or learn something new, and the boldness of Vulcan explorers is legendary. Therefore this Advantage is often taken for Vulcan characters.

Eidetic Memory

This Advantage is unusually common among Vulcans. Although it can still be considered rare among the Vulcan populace as a whole, the percentage of Vulcans who possess eidetic memories is much higher than the percentage among most other species. Some experts believe the Vulcans are genetically predisposed for this gift; others argue that it is simply a "fringe benefit" of the intense mental discipline which most Vulcans are trained in.

High Pain Threshold

"Pain is a thing of the mind. The mind can be controlled." Thanks to their strong mental discipline, many Vulcans learn this ability in one form or another. Some study it as a Psionic Skill to be invoked when needed (see the Path of *Rha*, p. 87). Others maintain an almost constant high tolerance for pain as a result of ongoing, unconscious mental discipline. They buy this Advantage.

Multitasking

This is another good Advantage for simulating the stereotypical Vulcan intellectual abilities. By invoking strict mental discipline and concentration, the character is able to apply his mind to two tasks at once.

Promotion

For game purposes, ranks in the Vulcan Defense Forces and the *V'Shar* can be considered identical to those listed in the Promotion Cost Table (*Star Trek: The Next Generation* core rulebook, p. 104). They may have very different names in the Vulcan language, but their cost in Development Points is identical.

Sense of Direction, Sense of Time

Many Vulcans possess these Advantages. They have a disturbing (to humans) ability to predict exactly when a ship will arrive at its destination or to find their way through a maze of valleys on some planet's surface. However, demonstration of these abilities is only likely to annoy characters who are Intolerant of Vulcans; it will be seen as an example of Vulcan "arrogance and so-called intellectual superiority."

Sexy

Although there are some humans and members of other species who find Vulcans exceptionally attractive, Vulcans rarely have this Advantage. Their actions and attitudes are often perceived as cold and robot-like; calling them "sexy" would be the furthest thing from most people's minds. A Vulcan who has this Advantage should also "buy off" his Hides Emotions Disadvantage, since it's difficult to be Sexy (in game terms) without showing some passion.

New Advantages

The following are some new Advantages which are frequently taken by Vulcan characters.

Great House (+1)

The character is related by direct bloodline to one of the ancient Great Houses of Vulcan. The character gains one die in any Renown test involving Vulcans. This Advantage does not necessarily imply a Patron or Ally, but often such characters also possess these Advantages.

Instant Calculator (+1)

The character is able to process numbers in his head more quickly than most people can do the same task with a PADD—he's not as fast as a computer, but he's often close. The character can reduce the time needed to perform any Test which involves a large amount of mathematical calculations by half or more; the Narrator determines the exact benefit in any given situation. The character must know how to perform the calculations before this Advantage is of any use; it does not confer any ability to perform calculus or other advanced mathematical calculations.

Kolinahr (+4)

Kolinahr is a Vulcan ritual intended to purge all emotions in pursuit of an ideal of pure logic. It is a long and grueling process which few Vulcans complete, but those who do are rewarded with greater logic to guide them. They can be recognized by a distinctive necklace or pectoral-like piece of jewelry which they are entitled to wear.

This Advantage simulates the training and achievements of a Vulcan who has completed the *Kolinahr* ritual. It may only be taken by Vulcans who have the Logic Edge at +2. It adds an additional +2 to all Tests to which Logic applies. It may also grant, at the Narrator's discretion, an additional die to Renown, Persuasion, or similar Tests involving fellow Vulcans. Vulcans with this Advantage must also possess Hides Emotions (-2).

Psionically Gifted (+4)

The character possesses an unusually high level of skill and ability with his mental powers. He may roll

one extra die whenever making a Test with any Psionic Skills.

Existing Disadvantages

As a general note, Vulcan characters should not take Disadvantages which inherently, or by implication, involve emotion-driven behavior which they would avoid, or which would be likely to make them act in ways which violate the Vulcan Code of Honor. Examples include Bloodlust, Greedy, Impulsive, Intolerant, Obsessive Tendencies, and Phobia. Narrators should make sure that if a Vulcan does take such a Disadvantage (perhaps by recasting it into a different, less emotional form), the player has a good explanation for why his character would have it.

Argumentative

Although its title implies a certain amount of emotional behavior, this Disadvantage does not necessarily require such emotion. A Vulcan could take it to simulate his desire to test all conclusions to their logical premises, to discuss every point of contention thoroughly until all possibilities are exhausted, or his logic-driven desire to find the best solution to any problem or dispute.

Code of Honor (Vulcan)

The details and value of the Vulcan "code of honor," which involves dedication to the principles of logic and nonviolence, are provided in the *ST:TNG* core rulebook on page 106. Obviously this Disadvantage is extremely common among Vulcans—so common that it is listed on their Template. However, there are some Vulcans who do not follow it; for example, a Vulcan security officer or general might logically determine that following a strict code of nonviolence is foolish and dangerous. This can be dealt with in two ways.

First, the character can be allowed to reduce the value of the Vulcan Code of Honor (to reflect his allegiance to, at best, a reduced set of its tenets), and at the same time to take additional Disadvantages to make up the "lost" Disadvantage points. Second, the Disadvantage can be dropped entirely and another one substituted in its place. However, the player should provide a good explanation for why his Vulcan character wouldn't have the Code of Honor; it and its beliefs are deeply ingrained in Vulcan society. "I don't want it" usually doesn't qualify as a good explanation.

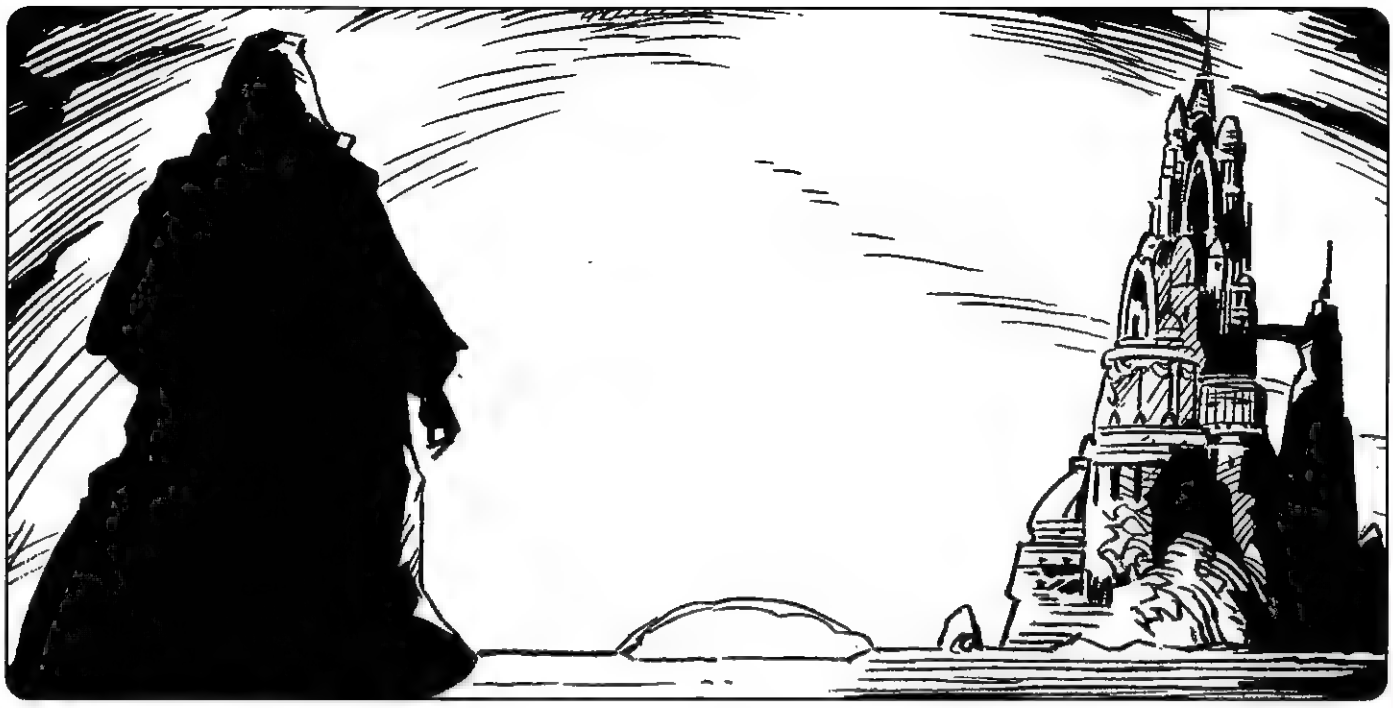
Code of Honor can also be used to simulate vows or oaths which certain members of Vulcan society take. For example, some Vulcan monks and priestesses swear a vow of silence. This could be represented with Code of Honor: Vow of Silence; it would prevent the character from communicating verbally (he would suffer punishment if he spoke; written or telepathic communication would still be possible, though). This would be a -1 Disadvantage. More severe vows would be worth more points. Compare the desired restrictions to the Code of Honor Table (page 106 of the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* core rulebook) to determine an appropriate value.

Pacifism

This Disadvantage is also common among Vulcans; it is a natural extension of parts of the Vulcan Code of Honor and one of the more important ethical teachings of *Tu-Surak*. Obviously it is not always appropriate for most Vulcan members of Starfleet, since that organization has definite military roles to fulfill and its officers may on occasion be required to use force.

Additional Vulcan Psionic Powers

The vast majority of Vulcans can only perform a basic mind-meld. However, there are other more powerful psychic and mental abilities which have been developed over the centuries by highly trained Vulcan adepts. The following specialized powers may only be performed by individuals trained in their use by a Vulcan teacher. Each of these abilities is learned separately. Many Vulcans never learn any of these abilities and most who do rarely learn more than two or three. Only the abilities *Khat-kutha*, *Khat-kel*, *Rha-tel*, *Rha-fak*, *Vhoshanta*, and *Vhoslan* can be learned by non-Vulcans. All six of these abilities may even be learned by nontelepaths, providing the outsider can find a Vulcan willing to teach them.



Teaching or learning any of these abilities is a highly personal and demanding process, involving several deep mind-melds between the teacher and the student and several years of intensive training. Learning any of these abilities often builds a deep, long-term bond between the student and the teacher. Unlike Betazoid telepathy, Vulcan psychic powers (including all of these abilities) work on almost all living creatures, including lifeforms which are noncorporeal or silicon-based. So, Vulcans also use mind-melds when teaching aliens.

Except when specifically contradicted in the following sections, learning any psionic skill to level 1 takes around six months. In general, any sincere student who expresses a willingness to learn the discipline and can provide honest and cogent reasons for why he wishes to learn can eventually find a teacher. However, many adepts willing to teach these systems already have students they are training. Prospective users may have to wait several months before their training can begin.

BUYING PSIONIC SKILLS

An example: Will wants his Vulcan Master Sepik to be a follower of the Paths of *Rha* and *Vos*. He takes three Psionic Skills at 2 from the Master Overlay: Rha-tel 2, Rha-fak 2, and Vhoshanta 2. Although tempted by the Monastic Training Package in Early Life History, Will chooses Early Mind School for his budding Master. For Advanced Education, Will selects the Psionic Training package, giving Sepik a total of Mind Meld 3 (added to the base 2 from the Vulcan Template). This Package allows two more Psionic Skills at 1, so Will adds 1 to Sepik's Rha-tel, bringing it to 3 also. Will then takes the other Skill level in Rha-tel-pan, since with Sepik's Rha-tel 3, he can now buy the cascade skill.

Cascade Abilities

Many of these abilities are extensions of other psionic disciplines. Learning such abilities requires that the student already know and have mastered other, more basic powers. Abilities which require such prerequisites are known as cascade abilities. To learn a cascade ability, the prerequisite must be known at level 3 or higher, since mastery of this prerequisite is necessary before the student can move on to learn more advanced disciplines. The abilities listed here are arranged in paths, based upon the prerequisites necessary to learn them.

The Path of Khat

Khat-kutha ["Mind Shield"] (Psi or Presence)

This ability is identical to the standard Mind Shield described on page 99 of the *Star Trek: The Next Generation RPG* core rulebook. However, some Vulcan mental adepts have learned to teach this ability to people with no psychic ability (0 in Psi). Such individuals use Presence (modified by the Willpower edge) instead.

Khat-kel ["Mind Bar"] (Psi or Presence)

This is a cascade ability requiring that the student have already mastered the psionic skill Mind Shield. Some Vulcan adepts can also teach *Khat-kel* to nonpsychics. At the request of Starfleet, Vulcan teachers have trained a number of important diplomats from several Federation species in this ability. Today, a number of different religious and monastic orders teach this ability.

Students learn to clear their minds of all thoughts and emotions. At the student's discretion, telepaths attempting to read his thoughts or emotions will either not notice the student's mind at all, or will merely sense calm and peaceful thoughts of no importance. A Moderate test is needed to begin using this ability,

and it may be maintained as long as desired. However, this mind bar must be dropped if the subject wishes to use any other psychic powers.

If the subject is injured, a Challenging test is required to maintain *Khat-kel*. However, even if this test fails, the difficulty of all attempts to read or otherwise contact the mind of someone who knows *Khat-kel* is increased by one difficulty level, unless the subject desires such contact.

The Path of Lis

This path is in some disrepute among Vulcans, given its close association with untruthfulness (a major Vulcan taboo). Its use is tightly regulated by the Vulcan government; only priesthoods with a tradition of *Lis* may teach it, and these orders teach it almost exclusively to those entering the sect as novices.

While the Path of *Lis* could be used by disreputable individuals to perform illegal acts, on Vulcan it is most commonly used by temple actors and other entertainers to perform feats of stage magic and to produce elaborate costumes and exotic appearances. In some communities, students of this discipline play parts in certain ritual dramas which may only be performed by individuals trained in this ability. In the Time of the Beginning, several mindlord sects of highly trained Vulcan spies used *Lispata* to aid in disguise and impersonation, but these sects have largely vanished in the modern day.

Lisjana ["Confuse the Senses"] (Psi)

Lisjana is a cascade ability requiring that the student have already mastered Projective Telepathy. The student learns to confuse psychically the senses of those around them. Students can make themselves unrecognizable to anyone looking at them, including people who know them quite well. This ability is especially useful when the student is attempting to blend into a large crowd. Students may add their skill level with *Lisjana* to any Stealth or Disguise rolls they make if they succeed in a *Lisjana* test of equal difficulty to the Stealth or Disguise test.

The use of this ability is closely tied to the *shalis* (pg. 65), and will not function without the use of such a device. While quite powerful, *Lisjana* is also extremely limited. This ability will fool the senses of all living beings observing the student. However, because the power is purely psionic in nature, sensors, robots, and automatic equipment remain entirely unaffected. In addition, *Lisjana* affects all nearby sentients who are observing the student, including those who are using sensors to scan the student, as long as the subjects are also within physical sight or hearing of the student.

Subjects who are physically isolated from the student and who are observing the student using only sensors are entirely unaffected by *Lisjana*. Today, few Vulcans learn *Lisjana*. It is primarily studied by ritual temple performers who wish to learn *Lispata*, and by a few hermits and wandering adepts who use it to assist in survival in the Vulcan wilderness.

Lispata ["Mislead the Senses"] (Psi)

This is a cascade ability requiring that the student have already mastered *Lisjana*, and also requires the use of a *shalis*. Only individuals trained in *Lispata* may create a *shalis*. Most teachers of this ability require that their students carve their own *shalis* crystal before teaching the student more than one level of this ability. Using *Lispata*, students may psionically alter their appearance so that they appear to be someone else. Students may even successfully appear to be another form of humanoid, and may also use *Lispata* to change the appearance of their clothing to resemble any garb they desire. While the illusions produced by this ability are incapable of causing any harm, they will fool all of the senses, including touch.

Minor changes in appearance or garb require a Routine test and several minutes of concentration. Changing appearance more rapidly or in a more extreme manner increases the difficulty of this test. Once the ability has been used the new appearance may be maintained indefinitely. However, the illusion vanishes if the user sleeps or is knocked unconscious, and the user must make a Moderate test to maintain the illusion if he is injured.

A student who has had a chance to observe another humanoid closely for several hours or more may even choose to assume the form of this humanoid psychically. While this ability does not give the student the knowledge of the subject's language or behavior, it will allow the student to look, sound, smell, and feel exactly like the subject. Given the psionic nature of this disguise, observers must make an Intellect (modified by the Perception edge) or Disguise test of one difficulty higher than the level of success achieved by the student. However, individuals who know the subject being impersonated extremely well reduce the difficulty of these Intellect or Disguise rolls by one level.

Liskel'tu ["Blind Senses"] (Psi)

Liskel'tu is a cascade ability requiring mastery of *Lispata*, and, like the other arts of *Lis*, the use of a *shalis*. Students of *Liskel'tu* may also use their *shalis* to become invisible. This invisibility causes living beings not to notice the student with any sense. This form of invisibility is extremely demanding. A Moderate test and several minutes of intense meditation are required to become invisible. The difficulty of this test is increased if this time is significantly shortened, or if the student is under extreme stress while becoming invisible. Students may only remain invisible for up to 15 minutes, after which they must rest and refrain from all psionic disciplines for at least another 30 minutes.

Injury or unconsciousness immediately dispels this invisibility, and since combat invariably draws intense attention to the attacker, this invisibility may not be maintained if the user attacks anyone. As with the related abilities of *Lisjana* and *Lispata*, all of the affects produced by *Liskel'tu* are purely psionic in nature and affect the perceptions of living beings only.

THE PATH OF PLAT

PLAT-VOK ["SHARE MIND"] (PSI)

Plat-vok is a cascade ability of Mind Meld. *Plat-vok* is a fairly common ability taught primarily by a number of sects of wandering psychic adepts including the *Planfa* monks, an order dedicated to promoting deep and harmonious marriages and friendships. The *Planfa* monks will only teach *Plat-vok* to a pair of extremely close friends or lovers. Students of *Plat-vok* are able to establish a psychic linkage with anyone they have ever shared a mind-meld with. This linkage allows both parties to halve the range penalties for all psychic abilities either party uses on the other, and eliminates the +2 range penalty for Mind Meld (see p. 99 of the *ST: TNG* core rulebook).

Students of *Plat-vok* may also share sensory information with someone they are linked to. This sharing allows the student to receive all or part of the sensory information his target is currently receiving, as well as sharing his own sensory information with the target. At the deepest levels the experience of *Plat-vok* is considered similar to being actually present in the target's body. However, while sensations of pain can be shared, the person receiving such sensations is not injured in any way. This sense sharing also experiences the same reduction in range penalties as all other uses of *Plat-vok*.

If desired, all forms of *Plat-vok* linkage can be maintained without the knowledge or consent of the target. However, most Vulcans consider this a gross violation of privacy and perform such a linkage only in dire circumstances. A *Plat-vok* linkage can be attempted at any time, regardless of the present distance between the participants. Numerous Vulcan married couples share this linkage with each other. Also, a number of Vulcan intelligence operatives and first-contact specialists use this ability to maintain contact with other agents without the risks of detection inherent in using combadges.

PLAT-RA ["SWITCH MINDS"] (PSI)

This relatively uncommon ability is known primarily to a few monasteries in the Llangon Mountains near ShirKahr. Related to the process which allows a dying Vulcan to place his *katra* in another, *Plat-ra* is essentially the ability to switch minds temporarily with another living being. In essence the two individuals switch bodies. However, this linkage is rather stressful and difficult to perform. First, the student must initiate a successful Mind Meld with the target. Making the actual transfer then requires at least a Challenging test to perform. If the target is unconscious or asleep when this ability is used, the difficulty of the test is reduced by one level.

Each time one of the participants suffers a wound level of damage, the student must make a Moderate test to maintain this switch. In any case, this linkage only lasts for one hour for every point the test succeeds by (minimum of one hour). If either party is killed during the switch then both parties die when it ends. While rarely used in this fashion, this ability can also be used on unwilling targets.

Since the two minds remain linked for the entire time the ability is in use, the student can gain access to some of the target's memories or skills on a Routine test, if the target is cooperative. If the target's mind is asleep, unconscious, or actively resisting this sharing, then the difficulty of this task is raised to Moderate. This test must be rolled each time the student attempts to access the target's memories. If desired, students of *Plat-ra* can also place both minds in one body, leaving the other body in a deep, comalike trance. If both individuals share a body, then sharing skills and memories is automatic.

This ability was once used by Vulcan mindlords who wished to control their underlings more directly. Today, it is most commonly studied by Vulcan diplomats or ship's counselors who use this transfer to help them more directly understand the individual they are negotiating with or counseling. The sharing experienced through *Plat-ra* has proved especially helpful in achieving a deep understanding with radically alien races. This ability is also occasionally used by Vulcans working in Starfleet Intelligence.

THE PATH OF RHA

"I am a Vulcan. There is no pain."
-Spock, "Operation: Annihilate!" (Star Trek)

RHA-TEL ["CONTROL BODY"] (PRESENCE)

This is one of the most basic and most widely known of these mental abilities. Like other abilities in the paths of *Rha* and *Vhos*, this ability is not fully psionic in nature. Instead, students learn to exert conscious control over their own bodies in a manner impossible for those not trained in this technique. This ability is most commonly learned from the *Hakihr* adepts of the Tinsha Monastery. The *Hakihr* adepts are a sect of ascetics devoted to achieving total, harmonious unity between mind and body. Several other monastic and ascetic orders on Vulcan also teach this ability.

Students learn to control their bodies so that they can reduce the affects of pain (eliminate all wound penalties for being Stunned or Injured, and halve the penalties from being Wounded). Eliminating these penalties requires a successful *Rha-tel* test the same round the character is wounded. All more serious wound penalties are unaffected. Also, badly damaged characters still lose all further actions in the round they are injured.

In addition, students of *Rha-tel* learn to perform exceptional feats like enduring extremes of hunger and thirst without having their efficiency reduced, fire walking, remaining completely immobile for several hours, enduring extreme temperatures (-20° C to 75° C) without harm, staying awake and functional for up to 48 hours, and holding their breath for up to 10 minutes. Most such uses of *Rha-tel* require

a Routine Moderate test. (At the Narrator's discretion, successful *Rha-tel* tests may improve the character's chances at such skills as Planetside Survival.) However, uses in combat or under extreme stress are at least one difficulty level higher. Uses of this ability are usually modified by the Willpower edge.

RHA-TEL TEST DIFFICULTIES

Wound Level	Resist Wound Penalties
Stunned	Routine
Injured	Moderate
Wounded	Challenging
Incapacitated	N/A
Near Death	N/A

Rha-tel-pan ["Master Body"] (Presence)

This is a cascade ability which requires knowledge of *Rha-tel*. Students learn to block all pain completely. Characters with this ability suffer no penalties from being Stunned, Injured, or Wounded, and may act normally on the same round they are wounded. To eliminate these penalties, characters must succeed in a *Rha-tel-pan* test in the same round they are injured.

Students of *Rha-tel-pan* also learn to use their control of blood flow and shock reactions to heal one wound level from all wounds they receive. This healing requires several minutes of concentration, and must be performed within approximately 30 minutes of the injury. Students may also place themselves into a deathlike trance which slows their consumption of food, water, and air by a factor of 30. Entering this trance requires a Moderate test (Challenging if the character is injured or under extreme stress). Doctors must make a Moderate First Aid or Medical Sciences roll to determine that a character in such a trance is not actually dead. All uses of this ability are usually modified by the Willpower edge.

RHA-TEL-PAN TEST DIFFICULTIES

Wound Level	Resist Wound Penalties	Heal 1 Wound Level
Stunned	No roll required	No roll required
Injured	Routine	Routine
Wounded	Moderate	Moderate
Incapacitated	N/A	Challenging
Near Death	N/A	Difficult

Rha-fak ["Enhance Fitness"] (Presence)

Like *Rha-tel*, this ability is also primarily learned from the *Hakihr* adepts. Students learn to focus their will to enhance their Fitness temporarily. This ability allows students to temporarily add one half (round down) of their Presence (adding in the Willpower edge) to their Fitness score. Fitness may be enhanced for no longer than 30 minutes. At the end of this time this bonus ceases and normal Fitness is temporarily reduced by one until the character has rested for at least 30 minutes. Students may not enhance any Attribute until after they have rested. Enhancing Fitness requires at least a minute of concentration and a Moderate test. Enhancing Fitness instantly, or during highly stressful situations like combat, increases the difficulty level of this test. All uses of this ability are usually modified by the Willpower Edge.

Rha-fak-pan ["Enhance Body"] (Presence)

This is a cascade ability which requires that the student have already mastered both *Rha-fak* and *Rha-tel*. Students of this ability learn to focus their will so that they can enhance their reflexes and heighten their senses. This ability allows students to add one half (round down) of their Presence (adding in the Willpower edge) temporarily to their Coordination score and to their Perception edge. Enhancing Coordination and Perception requires at least a minute of concentration and a Moderate test. Enhancing Coordination instantly or during combat or other highly stressful situations will increase the difficulty level of this test.

Students also learn to speed up their perceptions and reflexes. Any round the student can perform a Moderate *Rha-fak-pan* test, the student can perform a number of actions equal to the degree of success (the Skill Test total minus the Difficulty level, see p. 116 of the core rulebook) without any multiple-action penalties. However, all uses of *Rha-fak-pan* are extremely strenuous and may be performed for no longer than half an hour at a time. It is impossible to perform more than one feat of *Rha-fak* or *Rha-fak-pan* at a time. After performing any such feat the student must rest for at least half an hour before any other feats can be performed.

The Path of Shan

Shantip ["Healing Trance"] (Psi)

Shantip is one of the most commonly known of any of the abilities listed here. Many Vulcans learn *Shantip* while they are young, and numerous monasteries and wandering monks teach this ability. The student learns techniques needed to place himself into a deep trance which facilitates healing. In this trance the subject shuts out all external distractions and completely focuses his mind on aiding the healing process.

This trance allows the student to stabilize his wounds and to heal significantly more rapidly than normal. However, for the duration of the healing the

student is in a deep trance. Prematurely rousing the subject from this trance is risky, and unless a Moderate Medical Sciences roll is made the shock of doing so will cause the subject to lose one wound level (calculated after all healing has been accounted for). The safest method of ending a healing trance is to mind-meld with the patient; however, in emergencies shaking him vigorously also works. A student automatically leaves the trance when he has reduced his level of injury to Stunned.

Entering the trance requires no roll; the actual healing is more difficult. Every six hours the character may make a roll to heal one wound level. If this roll succeeds he heals one wound level, if a Dramatic Success is rolled he heals two wound levels, and if a Dramatic Failure is rolled an additional wound level is lost through mental strain.

Shantip Test Difficulties

Wound Level	Shantip Roll Needed to Heal 1 Wound Level
Stunned	N/A
Injured	Routine
Wounded	Moderate
Incapacitated	Challenging
Near Death	Difficult

Shan-laka ["Healing Touch"] (Psi)

This is a cascade ability requiring that the student have already mastered both *Shantip* and Mind Meld. Long used by traditional Vulcan healers, this ability is still taught in some high traditional Vulcan medical academies as well as by wandering monks. Most of those who know this ability will gladly teach it anyone who displays a deep and sincere desire to heal.

Students of *Shan-laka* learn how to place others in healing trances. Vulcans may use this ability upon any unresisting lifeform, sentient or not. Placing a character in a healing trance allows the character to make *Shantip* rolls based upon the healer's *Shan-laka* score and Psi attribute. Healers also learn to feed additional healing energy to their patients while these patients are in a healing trance. This energy allows characters to heal more safely and easily, but the healer must provide this energy for at least 15 minutes for every three hours the subject is in the healing trance. Transferring this energy requires that the healer be in a mind-meld with the patient. Providing the healing energy grants an additional +2 to the healing rolls made in this trance.

The Path of Tas

Tashaka ["Detect Psychic Traces"] (Psi)

Every living being leaves minute psychic traces of its presence behind on everything it touches. Students of this ability learn to detect such traces. Today, this ability is known to some Vulcan historians and law-enforcement officials. Use of this ability requires the student to clear his mind and touch the place or object for several minutes.

Students of *Tashaka* learn to identify the psychic traces left on objects and in places by people who have touched or visited them. The student may learn the identity of the people who have most recently touched the place or object, as well as how long ago and for how long the person touched the object. While traces left by each person are unique, students of this ability will only be able to identify traces of people they have met. Identifying the traces left by another Vulcan is a Routine test. Traces left by other races, or extremely old traces, each increase the Difficulty of this test.

Path of Tas Difficulties

These Difficulty levels should be roughly cumulative. For example, reading human or Klingon traces a day old would be Difficult (Moderate + Challenging).

Species*	Elapsed Time	Difficulty
Vulcan	Within 10 minutes	Routine
Romulan or other Vulcanoid	Within a day	Moderate
Other humanoid	Within the month	Challenging
Nonhumanoid, carbon-based	Within a year	Difficult
Non-carbon-based lifeform	More than a decade	Nearly Impossible

*Assuming a Vulcan telepath

These Difficulty levels are guidelines at best. Powerfully psionic beings might leave stronger traces, or might use a Mind Shield to avoid leaving any. A whole civilization leaves stronger traces than one passerby, and a being leaves clearer traces on a commonly used item than on a street it once walked.

Finally, reading the traces of someone very well known to the adept may be easier than the race or time would indicate (for Spock to detect Kirk's psychic traces would probably be Routine or Moderate at worst). The Narrator should adjust the Difficulty levels to an appropriate number at his discretion and keep in mind the good of the game.

Taskefa ["Read Psychic Traces"] (Psi)

This is a cascade ability requiring that the student have already mastered both *Tashaka* and Mind Meld. Because psychic traces fade when overlaid by many sets of more recent traces, the historian-priests of the Kalrenta plateau in Gol use this ability on ancient artifacts to learn more about the earliest days of Vulcan history.

Students of *Taskefa* learn to extract more detail from these traces. They can now learn the approximate mental and emotional state of the person while he was touching an object or visiting a place. Only feelings and mental state which were experi-

enced while the subject was actually touching the object can be sensed. Many of these traces are not clear enough to allow the student to pick up the actual words or images in the subject's mind. However, most these impressions are quite vivid, if rather imprecise. Certain traces are particularly strong, including those left while the subject was seriously upset or experiencing other deep feeling; these traces actually allow the student to experience directly the subject's mind at the time he touched the object, in a manner similar to the mental sharing experienced in a mind-meld. Reading the traces left by another Vulcan is a Routine test. Traces left by other races, or extremely old traces, each increase the difficulty of this test.

The Path of Vhos

Vhoshanta ["Body Reading"] (Intellect)

This ability is nonpsychic in nature. Students of *Vhoshanta* learn to read and understand the subtle, nonverbal signals given off by all lifeforms. *Vhoshanta* may be used on both sentients and animals, but it may only be used on lifeforms the user has spent a significant amount of time with. However, since all humanoids have similar physiologies, students of this ability may successfully use it on unfamiliar races of humanoids (at one or more additional levels of Difficulty, at the Narrator's discretion).

Vhoshanta is used like any other nonpsychic skill. Using this ability requires the user to make a test, usually modified by the user's Perception edge. Similar skills have been developed by a number of other races, including the Cardassians. On Vulcan this ability is most commonly learned either from the *Hakihr* adepts who use it to understand better how the workings of the mind are physically expressed, or from wandering *Planfa* monks who use this ability to help them in dispensing advice and aid to those in need.

The student learns to observe and interpret carefully the nonverbal signals produced by all lifeforms. Whether sentient or not, if the user can observe a living being for a minute or more, he can roughly determine its current mental and emotional state. The student can also use this information to predict how the subject will react in combat. Use of this ability gives the user the equivalent of an extra skill level to dodge or otherwise avoid being struck by any attacks made by the subject of the observation, if the student succeeds in a Moderate *Vhoshanta* test.

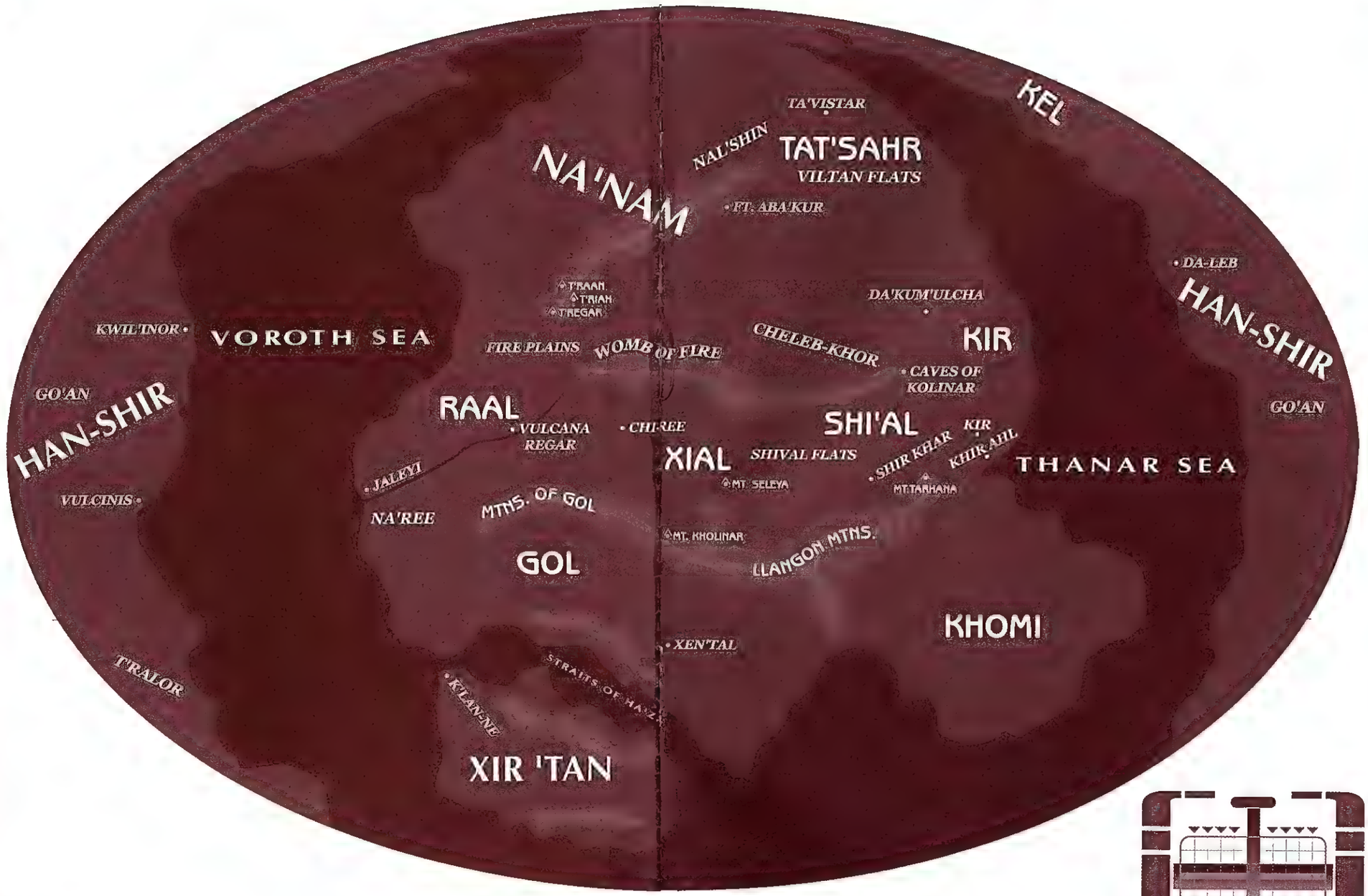
The student may observe only one subject at a time, and the subject must be in plain sight and can be no more than four meters away. *Vhoshanta* may only be used when the subject is physically present. Because it relies on pheromones and kinesthetic contact to work, *Vhoshanta* does not work over any sort of com-link, even one with full visual or holographic capability.

Vhoslan ["Body Knowledge"] (Intellect)

This is a cascade ability which requires knowledge of *Vhoshanta*. This ability is similar to *Vhoshanta*, except that now the student learns to use these same nonverbal clues as a method for determining more detailed information about the subject. The student may determine the subject's basic character and motivations. It is even possible to distinguish a generally peaceful and forgiving person from one who is normally harsh and judgmental but is currently behaving in a peaceful and forgiving manner.

Also, this ability may now be used to analyze people over com-links, as long as both audio and visual information about the subject is present. In addition, the user can now gain a general impression of the thoughts and emotions felt by large groups of people. For example, a student could easily determine the general reaction of a crowd to a speech or a performance.

Appendix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VOROTH SEA
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WOMB OF FIRE
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KIR
CAVES OF KOLINAR
GO'AN
HAN-SHIR
RAAL
VULCANA REGAR
CHI-REE
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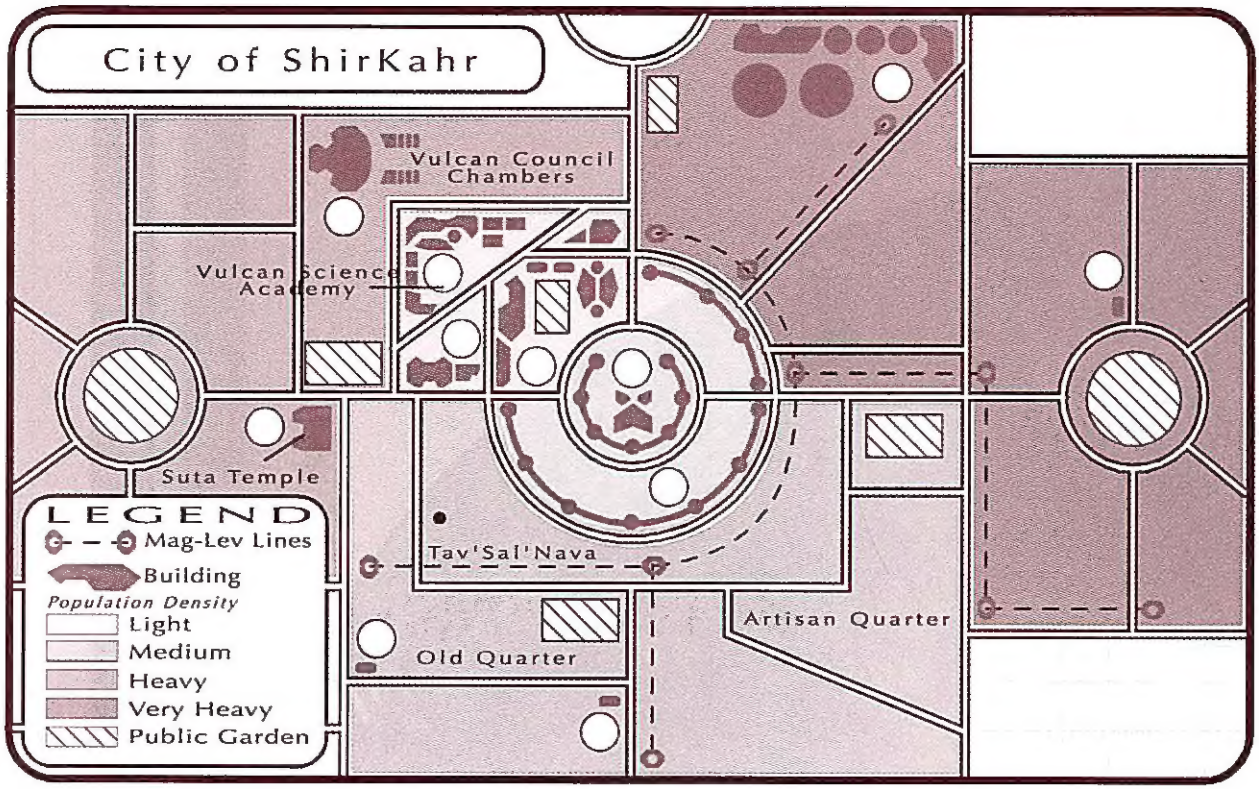
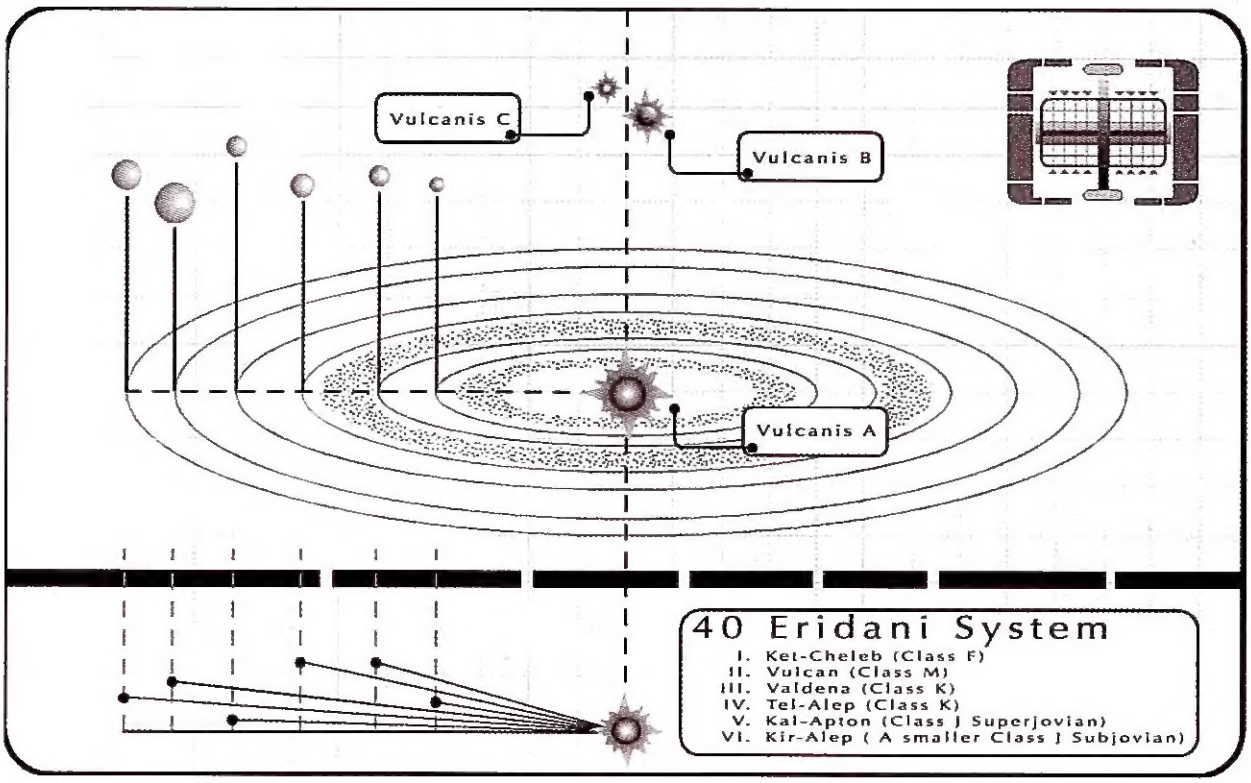

City of ShirKahr
Vulcan Council Chambers
Vulcan Science Academy
Suta Temple
Tav'Sal'Nava
Old Quarter
Artisan Quarter
LEGEND
Mag-Lev Lines
Building
Population Density
Light
Medium
Heavy
Very Heavy
Public Garden


Vulcanis C
Vulcanis B
Vulcanis A
40 Eridani System
I. Ket-Cheleb (Class F)
II. Vulcan (Class M)
III. Valdena (Class K)
IV. Tel-Alep (Class K)
V. Kal-Apton (Class J Superjovian)
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